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CLARIFICATION STRATEGIES
WITHIN
JOINT BOOK INTERACTIONS

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by

HELEN MARY RUTH HAYDEN

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of James Luke O'Sullivan—Irish educator.

ABSTRACT

Educational practitioners, for several decades, have encouraged parents to read to their children based on the premise that this activity will develop the strong oral and written competencies needed to succeed in school. Parents have heeded this advice with the result that for many children the bedtime story is an integral part of their families' lives.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature of interaction between parents and children within a joint book reading situation. The main focus for the research explored the questioning and response strategies of fathers/mothers and children as they shared a familiar/unfamiliar story. A secondary focus examined the relationship between the children's level of literacy development and a) the strategies employed by the participants, b) the contextualization of the stories to the children's world knowledge and c) environmental factors. A Concepts About Print Test and informal interviews were employed as data collection instruments. The sample was comprised of 27 kindergarten children, 20 fathers and 20 mothers. For the main focus of the study, each child was read three stories--a) a library book, b) a familiar or favourite book found in the home and c) an unfamiliar story prepared by the researcher. Verbatim transcriptions were made of the latter two. The dialogue evolving from the story book interactions were analysed according to a system of clarification strategies--Requests (Form-Function), Responses (Form-Function). Data collected from this analysis were subjected to MANOVA's. Descriptive analysis was carried out for the secondary focus of the study.

The statistical findings indicated fathers and mothers did not differ with respect to the strategies employed. Similar results were noted for children read to by fathers and children read to by mothers. However, differences were found for the kinds of strategies employed by the participants in familiar versus unfamiliar stories. In many instances, the statistical findings confirmed what has been observed in studies using ethnographic research methods.

The descriptive results indicated that High Print Aware children and their parents contextualized textual information more frequently than their Low Print Aware peers. Certain environmental factors also were more likely to be noted in the home of High Print Aware children. However, regardless of the level of literacy development, children and their parents employed request and response strategies which were similar in nature and preference.

The results of this study indicate that children were co-participants in the reading event. The nature of the interaction would appear to differ depending on the familiarity or unfamiliarity of the story.

Implications for further research, for teachers and for parents are also presented.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

North Americans live in a print oriented world. Such a highly literate society provides a multitude of opportunities in our daily lives to interact with print even outside of our working schedule. Everything from the writing on cereal boxes to television commercials, from business signs to traffic signs, from T-shirts to junk mail constitute an environment which is literally speckled with print. Little can be accomplished without reference to print--whether it is in deciding what movie to attend, what type and price of tomatoes to purchase, responding to the RSVP on a wedding invitation, checking the car repair bill, etc. In fact, success is often measured by the ability to read and write well in one's daily life.

The present hue and cry concerning students' literacy capabilities is understandable as they are presently living in an environment more dominated by print than at any other time in history. As a result of such a highly print-oriented culture, young children arrive at school for the first time having had a wide variety of experiences with the printed word. Smith (1976) puts it aptly when he recounts three-year-old Matthew's encounter with written language in a department store. Not only was the child able to identify some words on signs and packages but

> he knew a good deal about what the print ought to say on a package label which indicates how well he understood the function of print, and he could apply a probable meaning long before he could recognise the word on sight (p.298).

However, young children demonstrate varying degrees of sophistication in literacy awareness. It is the researcher's contention that this awareness is a result of the interactions between child and adult as they move through their daily lives. Adults focus the youngsters' attention on the symbols and the meaning carried by the writing. "That says 'STOP.'" "You're wearing your 'Oilers' sweater." Time and time again at any hour of the day, the child's attention is brought to bear upon the printed word which has meaning for him.

For several decades parents have been encouraged to read to their children. The premise appears to be that if parents read to their offspring, a solid and sound foundation of oral and written competencies will evolve in school years. That parents do read to their children is evident from the volume of research in the area. Teale (1981) in his review states that "correlational results indicate that there is a link between being read to and success in certain general competencies in language and literacy" (p.903). In other words, researchers know and parents believe that home reading does make a difference to the child's literacy awareness. Why it makes such a difference is still not clear.

From an early age, practically every night, many fathers and mothers take time from their busy schedules to curl up with their child in order to read a bedtime story. This quiet time together, when all appears well with the world, has become for many families nearly a sacred ritual. Within joint-book reading, parents and children are provided with many opportunities to interact verbally. If the sharing of this kind of literary event is considered a concept development situation, discussion concerning the strategies both partners employ to clarify their meanings of the situation may provide the body of research with a deeper awareness of what exactly happens in the joint-reading event. In other words, it may be possible to understand more specifically the nature of the event itself, that is what that experience does for the child and how the adult mediates the event for his offspring. Investigation into the nature of clarification requests and responses within such an episode may pave the way for further discernment of the relationships between joint-book reading as a literary event and children's concept development and understanding of literacy skills.

It appears to be taken for granted that all parents naturally know how most effectively to read stories to their children, how to assist them in developing and expanding ideas and concepts from the on-the-lap experience. Common sense, confirmed by the study done by Guinach and Jester (1972), would appear to indicate that this is not so. The strategies adults use when reading with their children may be as individualistic and varied as the participants themselves. In addition, today both father and mothers share the responsibilities of rearing their youngsters much more so than twenty years ago. With so many mothers in the work force, fathers find themselves in the position of having to relate to their young children in a more definite care-taking role than in the past. It could therefore be suggested that the variability in clarification strategies found among families may also be observed within families.

Vygotsky (1962) contended that intellectual skills grow out of social interactions in the service of practical activity and that how a child organised a process on the social level would determine how he functioned with this process on an individual level. King (1985) puts it succinctly when she states "in learning children rely on interactions with others who share their interests in new experiences" (p.37). One may therefore speculate and perhaps even expect, that the differences in the quality and quantity of interactions, in the similarities and dissimilarities found among and within families when adults and children share a book, may contribute to the differences in children's concept development of literacy skills and their success in school in later years.

As parents use their own individualistic styles in verbal interactions in literary events, the levels of involvement and reciprocity they expect or allow from their children and the lengths they go to to maintain dialogue on a particular facet of a book's content appear to warrant serious investigation. As Teale (1982) has stated "Rather than what we do to them, it might be said that children's reading and writing are induced and extended because of what we do with them" (p.161) (author's emphasis).

FOCUS FOR THE STUDY

Within the joint book experience, doubtlessly many occasions arise for parents and children to verbally interact. How do parents explain new labels and events within the story? Do they realize that some items within the text are causing conceptual confusion for their listeners? What clarification techniques do the adults use to assist their offspring in assimilating the information into the categories they have already formed? Are parents motivating their children to resolve their own conceptual conflicts? Or, are they narrowing the field of scope by focussing on one or two aspects of a story event? Perhaps they seek specifics by an open questioning technique. Alternately, it is possible that declarative and convergent strategies are more common within the joint book experience.

This researcher had little success in finding any studies which dealt with the child's own clarification requests or the strategies he uses in his search for knowledge. However there is little reason to suspect that children do not seek clarification for some of the messages read to them. One may assume that they need to clarify the utterances of parents as much if not more than the adults who seek clarification from them, for it is the child who is unfamiliar with print and what it contains. It is possible that youngsters may use the same strategies of repetition, confirmation, specification and elaboration as indicated in adult speech (Van Kleeck & Gunter, 1982). In the joint book episode, certain labels and events may be mentioned which the children do not understand. Do parents know this, and as it were, jump the gun on them and interpret for them without allowing the children to ask for themselves? Or, do children seek clarification of their own accord, by requesting more specific information than is provided by the text, thereby delineating more clearly the meaning of the author's intent? In effect, do children use questioning strategies themselves within the reading situation?

It is proposed therefore that as children move towards becoming readers, the adults who mediate print for them play a crucial role. The questions and responses directed towards the child in the joint book event, may demonstrate the goals or purposes of the adult, i.e. their intention to make the episode a learning experience for the child. Alternately the youngster's questions and responses may demonstrate his desire to learn and understand what is intended by the text.

It is also proposed that the quality and quantity of interaction may differ whether a familiar or an unfamiliar story is being read. Do parents question more in one situation than in another? Are favourite stories more conducive to verbal interactions than others and if so what questioning and response strategies appear to be selected for either.

Finally it is proposed that the quality and quantity of interaction may vary depending on whether fathers or mothers read to the child. Are interactive styles for mothers and fathers similar? Does the child interact in a similar fashion regardless of reader?

A study which investigates the nature of interaction within a joint book event may shed further light in the area of emergent reading behaviors. The analyses of a) the adult-child and child-adult verbal dialogues, b) the strategies fathers or mothers and children use and c) the responses each gives or receives, may provide more detailed knowledge to the existing body of research. Analyzing the data from the interactions may add further clues and enhance our understanding of the joint book experience.

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

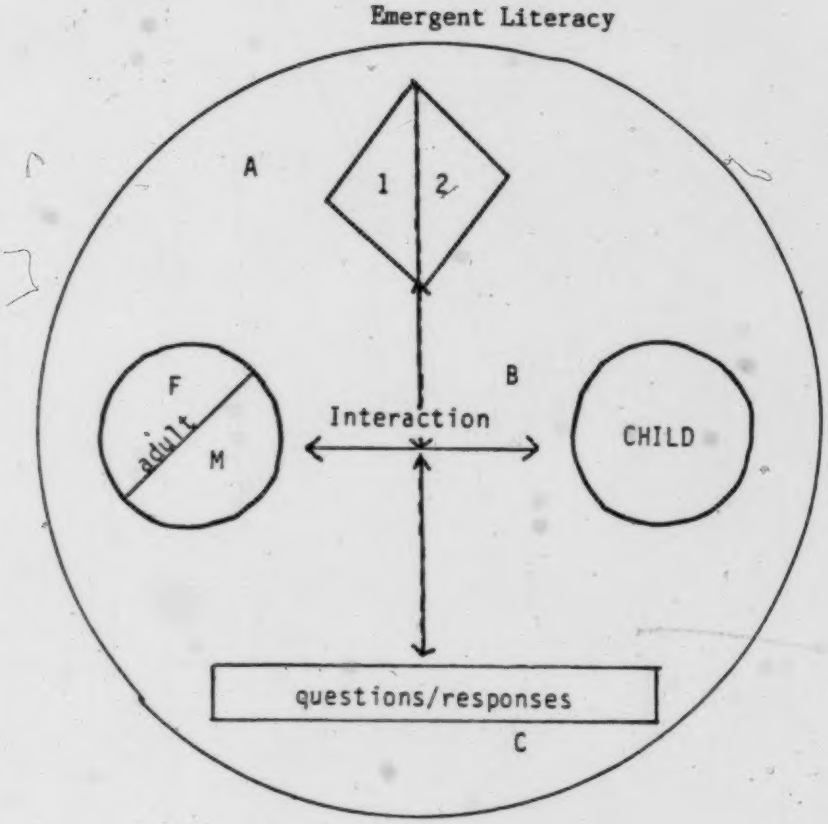
The purpose of the study is to investigate the nature of interaction between parents and their children within a joint book reading situation. The study will focus upon the quality and quantity of that interaction whether the father or mother is the reader and whether a familiar or unfamiliar story is being read. Figure 1 presents the relationship of factors within joint reading events.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Do fathers and mothers differ with respect to the strategies they employ when they read to their children?
2. Do children differ with respect to the strategies they employ when read to by fathers or opposed to being read to by mothers?
3. Do parents differ with respect to the strategies they employ when a familiar as opposed to an unfamiliar story is being read?
4. Do children differ with respect to the strategies they employ when a familiar as opposed to an unfamiliar story is being read?

In addition to the above research questions for which data will be analyzed statistically, the following questions will also be addressed with descriptive data being provided to provide some answers.

1. Is there a relationship between the children's level of literacy development and
    a. strategies employed by the parents


Emergent Literacy
A
1
2
B
F
adult
M
Interaction
CHILD
questions/responses
C

A. Story Event
  1. Familiar Story
  2. Unfamiliar story
B. Nature of interaction using specific strategies between either father or mother and child.
C. Questions and responses which emerge from or lead to further interaction.

Figure 1: Relationship of Factors Within Joint Book Events

   b. strategies employed by the children?

2. Is there a relationship between the children's level of literacy development and the contextualization of the stories to the children's world knowledge?
3. Is there a relationship between environmental factors in the home as indicated by the parent interviews and the children's level of literacy?

HYPOTHESES*

Because the literature gives no definite direction concerning the nature of parent-child interactions within a joint book reading experience, it is not feasible to provide research hypotheses. Consequently the following null hypotheses are stated:

1. There will be no significant differences in the strategies employed by fathers and mothers. Specifically there will be no differences for
   a. requests function
   b. requests form
   c. responses function
   d. responses form
2. There will be no significant differences in the strategies employed by parents in familiar and unfamiliar stories. Specifically there will be no differences for

---

*Level of significance for rejection or non-rejection of the hypotheses will be set at $p<.05$.

   a. requests function
   b. requests form
   c. responses function
   d. responses form

3. There will be no significant interaction effects between fathers/mothers and familiar/unfamiliar stories in terms of the strategies employed.
4. There will be no significant differences in the strategies employed by children when fathers read to them as opposed to when read to by mothers. Specifically there will be no differences for
   a. requests function
   b. requests form
   c. responses function
   d. responses form
5. There will be no significant differences in the strategies employed by children when a familiar as opposed to an unfamiliar story is being read to them. Specifically there will be no differences for
   a. requests function
   b. requests form
   c. responses function
   d. responses form
6. There will be no significant interaction effects between children read to by fathers/children read to by mothers and familiar/unfamiliar stories in terms of the strategies employed.

LIMITATIONS

1. The tapings of the stories may have had an inhibiting effect upon the participants and may have changed the "customary interactions" that would have been employed.
2. Some of the parents were known to the researcher/interviewer. Therefore, the adults may have provided information which they thought the interviewer, a teacher, may have wanted to hear rather than what they believed.
3. As the interviewer was not present at the story reading tapings, non-verbal behaviors such as nodding, smiling, etc. were not evident, contributing to a loss of information on which to base a judgment regarding the accuracy of the researcher's interpretation of the situation.

SIGNIFICANCE

Little, if any, empirical evidence exists on joint book reading in the home. With few exceptions, data have focussed on a few children over a long period of time (Crago and Crago, 1983; Doake, 1981; Snow, 1983). Others have investigated larger groups within the community (Heath, 1982) and in nursery school (Cochran-Smith, 1984). The thick descriptions which have resulted from these studies have been invaluable to those interested in the field of emergent reading. It would appear, however, that the time has come to balance the scales with a quantitative analysis of the interaction of a joint book reading episode.

The study is of theoretical interest as it blends mediated learning experiences with reading as a process event. If we adhere to the premise that reading schemata develop over time, the role the parent plays in assisting the child to understand decontextualized print may be vital to that successful development. If certain strategies appear to encourage and elicit interaction from the child in a home reading situation, it may not be unrealistic to suggest that teachers employ similar techniques and use those informal methods employed by effective parents.

Research would appear to indicate that no one person is wholly responsible for a child's reading development. However the importance of parents as co-developers appears to be more vital as knowledge concerning young children's learning strategies comes to light. This study may provide further insight into the importance of the parental role.

Much of the research has focussed upon the mother as the major facilitator of the child's language development. In this day of working mothers, fathers have taken over many of the traditional roles of child rearing. There is a dearth of material concerning fathers' impact on their children's cognitive development in general and on reading acquisition in particular. This study should help to provide some insight into the male parent's interactive strategies which may differ considerably from those of his wife.

If certain strategies appear to be conducive to fostering emergent literacy awareness, parents who do not employ such techniques may be encouraged to use them thus avoiding difficulties for their children in later school years.

It is hoped that as a result of this study a broader understanding of what parents say when they read with their children will surface. The crucial role they play seems to be an understood fait accompli in the literature. Why it is, is still uncertain.

OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS

Chapter II presents a review of the literature relevant to the purpose of the present study. Chapter III describes the theoretical framework for the study. The research design, the sample, data collection, data coding and data analysis are presented in Chapter IV. The statistical findings are presented and discussed in Chapter V. The descriptive data is presented, analyzed and discussed in Chapter VI. The final chapter presents an overview of the study, the findings, conclusions and implications thereof. Suggestions are made for further research and teacher education.

CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE

Historical Overview of Emergent Reading

A. The Early Years

During the eighteenth century and for a greater part of the nineteenth, children were viewed as empty vessels to be filled with a continuous flood of religious and moral dicta. Schools were in the tight control of the church. As the alphabetical method was the only known reading approach during this period, one may infer that a child's introduction to reading was both dull and unimaginative. However it is interesting to note that an ability to read was in the opinion of church leaders, a necessary skill. A genuine effort was made to teach children to read albeit with the open motive to indoctrinate them in the ways of their religion.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, while a more definite focus was apparent in the stress on elocution, early reading was still approached from an alphabetic perspective; syllable repetition, rote memorization were still very much in vogue. A high degree of emotive and emphatic oral reading was prevalent. "Try to read as if you were telling a story to your mother or talking to some of your playmates. Reading is talking from a book" (Smith, 1965, p.41). An offshoot from this focus upon elocutionary skills was the first step towards sounding out the letters of the words rather than just naming them.

By 1850, a new direction was apparent due in part to German-Pestalozzian influences (Smith, 1965, p.82). Because of the change in emphases from patriotic objectives to goals which focussed upon democratic ideals, children were educated with a view to making them intelligent citizens, future adults who could respond to the duties of the state. Initial reading experiences moved towards a continuation of the teaching of the sounds of the letters. At this point the introduction of the whole word method came into vogue.

Dechant (1970) quoting Pestalozzi states "to instruct man is nothing more than to help nature develop in its own way and the art of instruction depends primarily on harmonizing our messages, and the demands we make upon the child with his powers of the moment" (p.164). Here was the first suggestion that instruction should begin where the child was at, in a cognitive sense, rather than where educators thought he should be. In addition, the first glimmer of a theory of maturation was presented to be picked up in greater detail and with considerable vigour in the 1920's.

By the turn of the century, yet another emphasis came into focus. Life was becoming more leisurely. Middle class Americans were financially comfortable and had both the time and interest to pursue cultural activities—art, music, literature. What the child should read became as important in literacy development as how he should be taught. Content took precedence over form and an appreciation of good literature more valued than the mechanical ability to read (Smith, 1965, p.121). For beginning readers, a reconciliation between word and phonetic approaches was evident—unrelated sentences designed for the drilling of known words; vocabulary control dominated within the primers and many stories were of the repetitive genre. In older grades, complete unabridged literary works which replaced the short selections and extracts of famous authors attested to the new emphasis of reading as a cultural asset.

The naturalistic view of the child development, barely evident in the past fifty years, became more prominent. In 1908, Huey produced his treatise on reading which formed a catalyst for the naturalistic movement. It was the opinion of the author that children grew and developed naturally through their everyday experiences, through their interactions with those people and things around them and through the explanations and responses given to their enquiries. Huey (1908) put it aptly when he stated:

> The child makes endless questionings about the names of things as every mother knows. He is concerned also about the printed notices, signs, titles, visiting cards, etc. that come in his way and should be told what these 'say' when he makes inquiry. It is surprising how large a stock of printed or written words a child will gradually come to recognise in this way (p.313).

One may consider this statement to be one of the first references to environmental print which modern day researches may refer to as the 'natural way' to learn to read. However, Huey (1908) was of the opinion that formal instruction in learning to read should be postponed until at least the age of eight because of the physiological difficulties of young eyes focussing upon print. Huey's (1908) premise that a child could learn to read as he learned to talk, "from a desire to find out or tell something" and that learning to read was incidental to other things in which he might be interested (p.297) was not taken seriously by researchers until decades later.

The interpretation of childhood in particular and human behaviour in general changed direction as a result of Hall, a renowned psychologist of the early twentieth century. Hall (1904) contended that heredity and maturation, i.e. a predetermined nature which unfolded in stages, were the main factors in growth and development. Development was considered automatic where one stage followed upon another in an inevitable order. Following quickly upon the footsteps of Hall came the theories of Gesell (1940) which further supported the premise that growth was a result of 'neural ripening' and 'automatic and unfolding behaviour.' Just as the ability to walk and talk unfolded during one of these stages, so too the ability to read would also occur at a point in time. To confirm the premises of Huey (1908) and Dewey (1956), the father of the Progressive Movement, that reading should be postponed, Hall (1904) and Gesell (1940) provided a theoretical framework for the formers' contentions. This idea of ripeness or readiness caught fire and raged intensely for the next thirty years as a result of the explosion of the Testing Movement so highly valued at the time for its exactness of measurement and its objective analyses of human behaviour.

Therefore another direction was pointed to as being interpretative of childhood. No longer was the child seen as an empty vessel nor as someone who could be instructed solely by interaction with his environment. During the early 1920's, children were viewed as organisms who could only learn when they had reached the correct stage of development which would encourage the mastery of a particular task. It was felt that with the passing of time, a child would mature and be ready to read. Until that maturity was reached, a solution of postponement was the wisest choice. In other words, when the child was maturationally ready, success would be achieved.

One of the first articles to appear which linked reading readiness to the testing movement was published by Dickson in 1920. This writer contended that students experiencing difficulty in reading were those with mental ages of less than six years. Holmes (1927) revealed as a result of his investigation that large numbers of first graders were unable to grasp the essentials of early reading; furthermore, the researcher was of the opinion that these failures were a result of the lack of readiness to read. Therefore the point of concentration moved towards factors contained within the child himself rather than outside influences--poor instruction, inappropriate materials or large classrooms.

Because of the difficulties of measuring oral reading objectively, there was a shift from the oral to the silent mode, another result of the Testing Movement. Investigations demonstrated the superiority of silent reading to oral reading in speed and comprehension and provided the basis for the "rapidly growing body of opinion in favour of silent reading" (Smith, 1965, p.160).

The findings of one teaching method in one school system resulted in its results being accepted as applicable to all children in all schools. This particular investigation carried out by Morphett and Washburne (1931) not only is a landmark in the history of early reading but has had lasting effects practically to the present day. Knowing what we know today about the complexities of reading, this study should caution us against interpretations or generalizations which go beyond the findings. Criticism of the study in the light of today's standards of research may not however be entirely justified. "In the particular perspective of the time when it was performed, its design and the statistical treatment of the data were quite satisfactory" (Ollila, 1983, p.179). Within the study however, which found correlations between the mental age of six and a half years and a readiness to read, the findings were interpreted as causal.

The psychological view of ripeness as surfacing at one particular point in time reached new heights when Washburne, himself a prestigious leader of the Progressive Movement stated "Nowadays each first grade teacher in Winnetka has a chart showing when each of her children will be mentally six and a half and is careful to avoid any effort to get a child to read before he has reached this stage of mental growth" (Washburne, 1936).

Because of this close relationship between mental and chronological age, there was a continued focus upon within child factors. Tests and checklists which related to readiness began to surface in the schools, dealing with a myriad of factors--neurological, emotional, psychological, physiological, environmental. As Jenkins (1927) noted "We may look forward to the day when measures of readiness will rest in objective tests and parents and teachers will both be governed thereby" (p.209). Group administered to children in the first weeks of school, the tests' main components dealt with vocabulary development, auditory and visual discrimination features. Postponement of reading led to readiness programs, for teachers felt that they had to do something with the children for the first few months. The premise appeared to be that readiness programs were good for all, ready or not (Durkin, 1982, p.59). The onus fell upon the school to make the children ready i.e. readiness could be taught, and a philosophy permeated the educational scene that nature could be nurtured. Little attention was paid to the individual child; he was considered a member of the group biding his time, waiting to be ready to take the first giant step towards reading.

Needless to say some researchers voiced their objections. Gates and Bond (1936) as a result of their work viewed learning to read as being dependent upon a complex multitude of factors as opposed to just the mental age component. Methodology, quality of materials and instruction, and the needs of the individual were of importance. Perhaps most important Gates (1937) indicated that a mental age of five was sufficient for some children to approach the reading task and conversely a mental age of seven would not be sufficient for others.

Little attention however was paid to these researchers. They were swimming against the tide of conventional thought. Keeping the theory alive of a particular point in time to begin reading was reinforced by Olson (1949) whose ideas of childhood development referred to 'organismic age' and Havighurst's (1953) 'teachable moment,' both reaffirming the theories of Gesell set forth in the 1920's.

Sputnik was launched by the Russians in 1957. Mental panic set in across North America. Criticism of public school education was loud and clear. The results of these concerns was aptly put by Durkin (1982) when she stated "an atmosphere was characterized by the cry 'Let's teach more in our schools and let's teach it sooner'" (p.60).

Gray (1956) provided a new understanding of the concept of reading readiness--readiness could occur at any point in life when the reader could not interpret the concepts found within the print. To confirm this hypothesis, Ausubel (1959) contended that readiness was the result of the interaction between an individual's abilities and the demands of a given learning task. Bloom (1964), Bruner (1960) and Hunt (1961) were at the forefront of those theorists who supposed that hereditary and maturational factors together with environmental experiences had to be taken into consideration where a concept of readiness was concerned.

A new era had apparently dawned. What the child had learned prior to school entry, what experiences he had been exposed to became of importance. The child who was culturally deprived might not be seen as having viable experiences which would foster school reading success. Head Start and other interventional programs were intitiated as preventative measures. However little changed within the school systems themselves, with the exception of what used to pass as readiness instruction in grade one now became the responsibility of Kindergarten. Materials and methods changed little. In other words, although there was a surface attempt to look at the individual child, the main emphasis was to change him rather than the system which proposed to teach him.

Durkin (1968) has noted that most schools which have readiness programs continued to implement them for all children who entered their doors. In spite of the fact that many of the students possessed considerable reading abilities while others possessed few or none, readiness programs continued to hold sway until the mid-seventies. Such practices were in fact partly due to Durkin's own interpretation of early reading, i.e. readiness instruction was viewed as reading instruction in its earliest stages. Based on Ausubel's (1959) contention that learning occurs when the child's ability and the demands of the task interact, Durkin's (1968) revised concept of readiness provided a framework whereby a) instruction should be individualized and b) a variety of methods were necessary. Therefore while the readiness test per se fell out of favour, readiness instruction i.e. the skills associated with reading, was considered a viable tool for diagnosing what the child knew in relation to the materials to be presented and to provide for intervention which would assist him in meeting the requirements necessary for a particular program.

Perhaps the most interesting facet of the whole history of early reading is that reading instruction was considered separately from reading pleasure. From the earliest days, the books used in schools were not those which were written to delight the imagination and stir the emotions. While many school texts did contain amusing, exciting and adventurous stories, most were sterile, unimaginative and often far removed from the child's experiences.

B. A Modern Interpretation

Modern thinking concerning early reading was initiated by the rise of psycholinguistics. Chomsky in 1969 in his description of language development, demonstrated that children cognitively attempt to make sense of their physical environment through the medium of language. In their search for understanding, they select, test and generate categories of words and knowledge. Goodman (1976) and Smith (1973), at the forefront of the psycholinguistic reading field, contend that children acquire their knowledge of print in the same manner by which they acquire oral language because of their need to make sense of their environment. Because of that similarity of purpose of communication, oral and written language rely on similar mental processes for understanding. Holdaway (1979) states that "written language is a graphic system based on speech in that it uses the same semantic systems to convey meaning" (p.83). This same researcher further contends that "literacy skills develop in the same 'natural' way as spoken language when conditions for learning are comparable" (p.20). To confirm this statement, Goodman and Goodman (1978) note that "language learning whether oral or written is motivated by a need to communicate, to understand and be understood" (p.3).

Therefore, although for generations it was considered that reading began with formal instruction, present day knowledge appears to advocate that not only is early reading closely related to the development of oral language, but the child begins to read as he tries to make sense of the print in his environment. In many cases several years prior to formal instruction in the art at school, he learns to read through trial and error, testing and generating hypotheses of what he sees in the printed world, organizing his knowledge as he organizes his oral language experiences. In other words, children are not biding their time, in the cognitive sense, waiting for formal instruction but seek to understand how their world functions. It may be stated therefore that there is no readiness period per se. Rather children gradually refine their cognitive and linguistic abilities which together with their inner motivation to understand their environment and their knowledge of syntax and semantics, encourage them to attempt to understand the print which surrounds them. Reid (1981) notes that early reading is "interpreted as a gradual spontaneous evolution beginning with the holistic attribution of meaning in print and later, apparently with instruction, becoming refined in such a way as to enable the reader to become knowledgeable about the component elements of words (and perhaps to oral language)" (p.70).

Such a perspective of early reading is a far cry from the stamping on of knowledge, the honing of readiness skills, the waiting for the magical maturational age and/or for seeing readiness as pre-reading. Today's thoughts would seem to indicate that many children possess a schema for reading which they have developed in much the same way as they develop schema for other important facets of life. They continue to refine and reorganize their reading schema, expanding their awareness that the purpose of print is to convey meaning. This development begins when they attain the ability to respond to printed stimuli long before school entrance age. Because of their own curiosity and the responsiveness of the significant adults in their lives, they seek information about the print which they encounter. Using speech and his knowledge of oral language, the child questions the readers in his environment who in turn interpret or mediate the print for him. In other words, the adult moves the child towards becoming a reader, exposing him to and facilitating his understanding of the print which is important to both of them. If the adult does not see book reading as a medium of interaction, then book reading will not occur for the child. The child will only have the opportunity to inquire about environmental print. If on the other hand the adult uses books and other non-environmental print to develop an awareness of literacy, that child will emerge towards literacy having been exposed to contextualized and decontextualized print.

That children learn to read as they learn oral language should not be interpreted that either occur naturally in the sense that they are not taught. Admittedly parents do not formally teach their children to speak. Research has been considerable on the effects of adult language on infant speech development (Snow & Ferguson, 1977). The input provided by the adult is extensive and the quality of adults' language—the responsiveness and the appropriateness of the adult's language to the infant's level of development--has an impact on the language development of the infant. One may say therefore, that children are not formally taught how to speak; however social and physical environments are provided which support the child as he strives to learn the language. It is possible that the same kinds of support may be evident as children seek to understand print. In order to learn in a particular domain, the child must be able to access experiences out of which that learning can take place. Children who have few or no books in the home, who are not read to or do not have adults who positively respond to their questions may be those same youngsters who are not provided with crucial literate experiences. If children were 'natural' readers, they would come to know print through direct interaction with the symbols, regardless of the quality of adult mediated experiences. Common sense would appear to indicate that such is not the case. Rather a rich print environment, supported positively by significant others, who albeit are unaware that they make a solid contribution to the child's emergent literacy development, seems to be the focus of current emergent reading research.

It is apparent therefore that a shift in emphasis concerning what early reading is composed of, has occurred during the last ten years. The research focus now is on the child as learner rather than the adult as teacher (Goodman, 1976; Smith, 1973; Teale, 1982), the processes which the youngster uses as he encounters print (Goodman & Goodman, 1979; Swartz, 1977), the reading schema which he possesses at various ages (Clay, 1976; Hayden, 1981; Hiebert, 1981), and the impact the home environment has on the child's literacy development (Doake, 1981; Heath, 1982; Snow, 1983). Studies in these areas are casting new light upon the subject of how children move towards becoming readers.

Early literacy development is presently viewed as more than being a matter of teaching children to recognize the alphabet or a few words or letter sound associations. Exposure to print is not sufficient of itself. Rather adults who mediate the literate environment which they see as being important for their children's development, adults who provide essential literacy experiences and who support the youngsters in their search for meaning, seem to merit further investigation in the light of the present knowledge of language in general and written language in particular.

C. Concerns from the Literature

Ten years ago few studies were concerned with emergent literacy. Most research which dealt with early reading behaviors focussed at the Kindergarten or Grade One level of development. It is only in recent years that researchers have become interested in the role parents play in assisting their children in learning to read. The old cliche that parents are their children's first teachers is taking on new meaning in the light of the results of those studies which focussed upon family literacy as an educational phenomenon.

That many children come to school with varying degrees of print awareness is recognized. Some youngsters demonstrate a highly sophisticated knowledge about literacy. They are already readers in the sense that they approach books with confidence, know the mechanics of book handling, realize that the words on the pages are symbolic representations of objects and situations in real life and are able, in many instances, to read what is written on the page with comprehension and meaning. Within the same community however, other children do not demonstrate such skills. Their knowledge about print is minimal at best. For some, the transition to the abstract world of literacy is fraught with difficulty. How the awareness of the former group comes about may be the result of the interactions between those children and their parents as they discuss print-related activities, in particular joint book events, in their daily lives. Iverson and Walberg (1981) reviewed the literature encompassing a 19-year period of the correlation of home environment and learning in eight countries. Their analyses demonstrated that "ability and achievement are more closely linked to the sociopsychological environment and intellectual stimulation in the home than they are to parental socio-economic status indicators such as occupation and amount of education" (p.144).

Considerable research exists indicating that joint book reading is of prime importance in preparing children for and making them aware of the reading act. Clark (1976), Doake (1981), and Taylor (1983) carried out descriptive studies which included focussing upon the variety and availability of reading materials within the home and the positive effects these materials had on children's awareness of print. Other researchers investigated the function of print in the environment as it related to literacy development (Brailsford, 1985; Clark, 1976; Clay, 1979; Holdaway, 1979; Smith, 1978). The longitudinal studies (Crago and Crago, 1983; Lass, 1982, Torrey, 1969) of an individual child's growth and development in literacy provide some evidence of the significance of parent interaction as children evolve in their literacy awareness. How parents or other significant others respond to children's efforts to use and make sense of the printed word has been investigated by Brailsford (1985), Durkin (1974), Juliebo (1985), and Taylor (1983).

How parents interact with their children during a literacy event has received less attention however. Flood (1977), Gleason (1975), Guinach and Jester (1972) and Teale et al (1981) have shown that literacy interactions differ qualitatively and quantitatively between and among families. In other words, parents read differently to children. A search of the literature did not yield much data which focussed on the actual verbal interactions which take place during the reading event. Harkness and Miller (1982), Martinez (1983), Ninio and Bruner (1978), Snow (1983), and Teale (1982) do present some evidence of specific interactions within families. Much of the research mentioned focussed attention on very young children. Limited data are available for children between the years of three and five. Therefore, we are left with the following questions. What do parents say and how do their children respond to their queries as they read together? Are some parents more 'effective' in their styles of interactions than others? Are some strategies more potent than others in fostering literacy awareness? What strategies does the adult use in his attempt to focus the child's attention on what the former considers important facets of literacy? In other words how do parents 'teach' their children about literacy as they read together? Within the whole area of emergent reading, the time has come to focus upon the interactions which take place within the reading act between parents and children as a necessary step in order to ascertain more accurately what relationship exists between being read to at home and literacy awareness. One may expect that the differences in the quality and quantity of interaction within the joint book experience may contribute considerably to the differences in children's development of literacy skills. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to investigate more deeply the nature of that interaction.

CHAPTER III

THEORY DEVELOPMENT

A. Sociopsychological Factors

Much has been written on the phenomenon of natural readers (Forester, 1977; Holdaway, 1979; Hoskisson, 1979; Torrey, 1969). These researchers, among a host of others have focussed their attention on children who have learned to read prior to school entrance. The term 'natural' is somewhat unfortunate as it carries with it an understanding of being somewhat innate. That children grow and develop physically as time goes by may be seen as a built-in progression of their genetic inheritance. Such development could be termed 'natural' in the sense that neither the child (given proper care and nutrition) nor his parents have any say in how tall he will eventually become, whether he will be left-handed or right-handed, or how curly his hair will be. One cannot be taught to have curlier hair nor to grow taller, although one may be taught (or perhaps forced is a better word) to use the right hand. However, neurologists have warned the consequences may be disastrous. One may question whether natural readers should be referred to as such at all. Torrey (1969) in her conclusions from a case study of a four-year-old child's ability to read and write states "Reading for John seems to have been learned but not to have been taught" (p.556). If one accepts this researcher's position that lack of teaching is what denotes the 'natural' reader, one needs a definition of the word 'teaching.' If the label refers to a hierarchy of skills presented in a formalized fashion within a particular content or discipline, then one may agree that these natural readers have not been taught. On the other hand, it would not seem feasible to suggest that just because the children are surrounded by print and observe others engaged in reading, that these 'natural readers' learn to read by osmosis.

Teale (1982) presents a pertinent view. "In an important sense the child's literacy environment does not have an independent existence; it is constructed in the interactions between the child and those persons around him or her" (p.559). Such a perspective differs from that of Forester (1975), Hoskisson (1979), Torrey (1969) and others who base their conceptions of 'natural' readers on the Piagetian (1970) point of view. That is, the child acquires his knowledge from his interactions with the world as an active learner, one who accommodates and assimilates new experiences into his present body of knowledge thereby reinventing or reorganizing that knowledge. These processes of assimilation and accommodation are viewed, in other words, as a learning strategy for the child whereby actively interacting with his environment, he tests the hypotheses of what he already knows in light of the new experiences and thus generates new rules for understanding. Learning is viewed as the result of the interaction between the organism and the world around him, a result of the direct exposure to stimuli.

One may suppose that much of what we learn can be accounted for within the Piagetian model of S-O-R. If we see the child as actively constructing his world by perceiving and doing then we may suppose that much of what he learns is a result of his own interaction with the environment. However it must be noted that the environment which the child experiences has been organized by the adults within it in specific ways. Whereas Piaget conceives of the human factor as one object among others, Feuerstein (1979) is of the opinion that the human is separate and quite distinct from other objects within that environment.

Feuerstein et al (1980) propose a theoretical framework by which the course of cognitive development of an individual is viewed as being changed by the intentional intervention of a human mediator. In other words, an initiated adult or significant other person interposes himself between the stimulus and the organism with the intention of altering or changing the stimulus and the child. These researchers contend that while the S-O-R concept of learning presented by Piaget is important, it is not sufficient to account for the differences which are found in the cognitive development of individuals. They propose that it is the lack of mediated experiences which accounts for those differences. The human mediator who interposes himself between the child and his environment frames or filters the stimulus in order that it may have the most effective impact on the child, the result being his ability to encode and decode reality by establishing a network of relationships among and within discrete and disparate objects and events (Feuerstein et al, 1980, p.27). Rather than the S-O-R concept of learning proposed by Piaget (1970), Feuerstein and Jensen (1980) present S-H-O-R where H indicates the human mediator. Therefore the organized environment is the result of a human act of mediation.

> A mediated learning experience is that which takes place when an initiated human being, mother or other care-giving adult, interposes himself between the organism and the stimulus impinging upon it and mediates, transforms, reorders, organizes, groups and frames the stimuli in the direction of some specifically intended goal or purpose (Feuerstein and Jensen, 1980, p.409).

The mediator deliberately chooses to focus the child's attention on certain facets or aspects of the myriad of stimuli with which he comes in contact as opposed to other elements or factors. While Feuerstein and Jensen (1980) contend that cognitive development is produced by two modalities--direct exposure to stimuli, and mediated learning experiences, they suggest that as a result of the latter, the child is provided with "sets of strategies and repertoires" which permit him to make greater use of the stimuli which inpinge upon him (p.410). The absence or presence of mediated learning experiences as defined above, according to the researchers, "may explain the differences in cognitive development among individuals otherwise equally endowed or equally deprived" (p.409).

Feuerstein (1979) stipulated that the MLE (mediated learning experience) may be divided into two broad categories. The first is cultural--"the transmission of information, values and attitudes" (p.366). The second category focusses upon making the child sensitive to the stimuli impinging upon him so that he may become modified as a result of his encounter with them. "The mediator . . . uses the stimuli in such a way as to produce changes in the receiving child, the effect of which will transcend his immediate needs" (p.367). As the adult organizes certain stimuli or events, his intent is not just to solve a current problem or to bring about awareness of a present event. Rather heightening the child's sensibilities of how the present situation may be effective in future situations is paramount. The mediator anticipates that the mediation will have effect for future instances in the child's life.

Feuerstein and Jensen (1980) define two characteristics as being central to a MLE.

a) "the intention on the part of the mediator engaging the mediated individual" (p.410) and

b) "the transcending nature of the mediating act beyond the immediate need that triggered it" (p.410).

The intentionality element is seen as a sharing characteristic whereby the mediator, whether explicitly or implicitly, encourages the child to participate in the interaction which is initiated by the stimulus. The adult draws the youngster's attention to a particular stimulus, assists him in focussing upon it, thereby enlarging while at the same time restricting the child's view of the world. The mediator demonstrates the relationship of this stimulus to other stimuli previously experienced. Because of the mediator's desire to share his goal and purpose with the child, the latter is made aware of what he should focus upon, what he should observe and how he should differentiate among stimuli. The child may show his intent to share in the interaction by paying closer attention, by asking questions or by smiling, etc. As previously mentioned, the transcendence factor stipulates that immediate satisfaction or the immediate solution of present problems is not of prime importance. Rather the aim is to produce a change in the child which will assist him in responding to future experiences and needs.

Because of the mediated learning experience which has both of these characteristics, the direct exposure experience is heightened and results in a "capacity to use reality, perceived and experienced, in an efficient way" (Feuerstein, 1979, p.368).

Intentionality and transcendence are core requirements in order for a MLE to take place. How do parents provide for a MLE as they interact with their children as they relate to literacy experiences? Are some of the strategies they employ more effective than others so that the adult may promote shared intent? What tactics appear to be more conducive to contextualizing the incoming information? What different language patterns or additionally what different sources of stimulation are evident as parents interpose themselves between their children and print? One may suspect that there is more than one effective strategy, that parents demonstrate several different procedures and that even within a simple parent-child dyad, a variety of linguistic and psychological devices may be evident.

That reading is viewed as a social phenomenon appears to be pedagogically sound in the light of current research (Bloome, 1982; Heath, 1982; Teale, 1982; Wells, 1982). Such understanding stems from current thought which considers that the development of 'natural' literacy may be successfully compared to oral language acquisition (Clark, 1976; Doake, 1981; Holdaway, 1979; Snow, 1983). It has been noted that if children were taught to speak in the same way they are normally taught to read, they might never acquire oracy. However it is feasible to suggest that some parents do teach their children to read by exposing them to the similar linguistic strategies as when the youngsters are learning to talk. Perhaps the parents see literacy as a natural extension of oral language acquisition and either consciously or subconsciously structure similar communicative dialogue between themselves and the child during the literacy event. Ninio and Bruner (1978) state "no gross modification of the adult's customary use of language is required to carrying out book reading" (p.8).

Schickedanz (1978) in her observations of story reading events states "a situation that is loaded with positive effect is the situation that is loaded with information for the child" (p.54). One can think of few other situations which are more positive than the bed-time story. Most of us can remember the warm feelings we had when all was well with the world and a story was being read. For a short moment at the end of a busy day, we had our parent's undivided attention and together we shared an exciting experience bound between the pages of a book; we had our favourites read to us over and over; new stories were introduced which often in turn became special. Though many of us may have forgotten what was said during these episodes, few of us would argue that the reading situation was loaded with positive 'affect.'

One of the delightful accounts of an early reader rises out of fiction. In To Kill A Mockingbird, Scout, the narrator, relates her own wonder at how she became a reader and the reaction of her first grade teacher to her knowledge of print. Having just read My First Reader and the stock market quotations from the Mobile Register, her teacher cautions her not to let her father teach her to read any more. The story continues:

> "Teach me?" I said in surprise. "He hasn't taught me anything, Miss Caroline. Atticus ain't got time to teach me anything," I added, when Miss Caroline smiled and shook her head. "Why, he's so tired at night he just sits in the living room and reads."
>
> "If he didn't teach you, who did?" Miss Caroline asked good-naturedly. "Somebody did. You weren't born reading the Mobile Register."
>
> "Jem says I was. He read in a book where I was a Bullfinch instead of a Finch. Jem says my name's really Jean Louise Bullfinch, that I got swapped when I was born and I'm really a--"
>
> Miss Caroline apparently thought I was lying. "Let's not let our imaginations run away with us, dear," she said. "Now you tell your father not to teach you any more. It's best to begin reading with a fresh mind. You tell him I'll take over from here and try to undo the damage--"
>
> "M'am?"
>
> "Your father does not know how to teach. You can have a seat now."
>
> I mumbled that I was sorry and retired meditating upon my crime. I never deliberately learned to read, but somehow I had been wallowing illicitly in the daily papers. In the long hours of church--was it then I learned? I could not remember not being able to read hymns. Now that I was compelled to think about it, reading was something that just came to me, as learning to fasten the seat of my union suit without looking around, or achieving two bows from a snarl of shoelaces. I could not remember when the lines above Atticus's moving finger separated into words, but I had stared at them all the evenings in my memory, listening to the news of the day, Bills to Be Enacted into Laws, the diaries of Loronzo Dow--anything Atticus happened to be reading when I crawled into his lap every night. Until I feared I would lose it, I never loved to read. One does not love breathing. . . . (Lee, 1960, p.28).

Obviously Scout had been surrounded and immersed by print from an early age. Although the content of the works appear to be very unusual for a young child together with the fact that she makes no mention of any verbal interactions generated by the reading material, it would appear that because of her inquisitive nature, some dialogue would have taken place. Her inquiring mind, so evident throughout the rest of the novel and her curious nature would seem to indicate that she may have asked questions about the content of the reading material and even about the print itself. That the reader was 'teaching,' albeit unknowingly, is also evident. "Atticus's moving finger" demonstrates that he was making the child aware that it was the print which was the focus of attention.

Early readers have been the subject of investigation for many years. One of the first accounts of a child's story reading experiences was published by White in 1954. Recorded as a diary over a three year period of her two-year-old daughter, White describes the child's awakening to literacy. Although the author makes little effort to focus on her own significance and importance as a reader within the joint book events, there is some indication that her love of books spilled over to the child, thus providing the latter with strong motivation and encouragement to appreciate print for its own worth. The Crago's (1983) longitudinal study of their daughter via tape recordings and notes taken during the readings, demonstrate a somewhat different style. In their efforts to be as objective as possible, they only included in their study those comments on the part of the child which resulted from non-probing on their part. Here again, the role of the adult, the strategies used with the child within the interaction were somewhat ignored in the researchers' fervour to only look at what the child did. In other words, they minimized their own importance as participants in the event and the natural use of dialogue as an integral part of joint reading.

Ninio & Bruner's (1978) ten month observational study of one very young child and his mother as they looked at picture books together, found that the interactions which ensued occurred with a "structured interactional sequence that had the texture of a dialogue" (p.6). This was one of the first attempts to focus upon the dual roles as interactive partners in a joint book event. The mother's speech centered around the content of the books--labelling picture items, etc.--and the child took his turn as it were by smiling, pointing, vocalizing and laughing. In other words, although this particular child was at the non-verbal stage, a conversational pattern emerged whereby the adult assisted the child to focus in on what was happening in 'print' and encouraged him to participate to the level of his ability. The adult scaffolded the child's understanding of what was of importance in the book. Similar results were found by Snow (1983) and Teale (1982), that is, that speech which surrounds joint book events is of a dialoguing nature.

Conversation which surrounds the story reading event may be qualitatively different to that conversation which is stimulated by practical activity (Wells, 1983, p.73). Because the verbal interactions do not have the support of an ongoing activity where pointing and other non-verbal language may bring meaning to the situation, the dialogue which is generated by the story content may be more reflective. Wells (1983) states that story book conversation "provides a bridge between the context embedded that accompanies everyday activity and the more context independent talk that is characteristic of many of the curricular tasks that the child will be expected to engage in at school" (p.73).

One may presume therefore that while teachers and researchers have encouraged parents to read to their children and have seen such activities as 'good' preparatory tools for success in school, the crucial factor may be reading with the child, i.e. dialoguing with him by using the story (decontextualized print) as the basis for refining his thinking processes in order that he may be able to approach reading on his own.

Harkness & Miller (1982) concur that joint book dialogue is different to that of ordinary speech and put it succinctly when they state:

> In fact, it is hardly a dialogue since we must take into account the very intrusive presence of the book which defines the beginning and end of the event as well as supplies a schedule of activities. Both the physical presence of the book and the author as participants add yet another element to the interaction. The book is thus not a passive participant but offers a whole range of new alternatives for the mother and child. It provides a focus as well as cues for fostering the dialogue and hastening it towards its end (Turn the page, please!); it provides a stimulus for conversation in both pictures and text; it provides a beginning and end to the interaction so that each participant at any given time knows approximately what the status of the interaction is; it provides a whole range of meanings--those intended by the author and those interpreted by the participants. It also, and perhaps most importantly, provides a purpose for the interaction (p.6).

If the above statement is acceptable, one may suggest that books are alive with tremendous opportunities to foster literacy awareness. As adult and child share the experiences intended by the author and relate them to their own background knowledge, the context independent dialogue which ensues should demonstrate how the child goes about learning the process of reading and the function of print.

The questions posed and the responses given become an integral part of the story, giving the child an understanding that when he reads for himself in later years, self-questioning is an important facet of coming to grips with the author's intent. Harkness & Miller (1982) as a result of their study with one three-year-old over a period of nine months, found that when a story was first read to the child, the adult "noted the information she felt to be important by commenting on it or asking questions" (p.39). As the child got to know the story better after several readings, it was he who sought the information that he wished to know. One may presume that in such situations, knowledge is constructed by the learner when he has a base to work from. In other words, he now knows what kind of question to ask. In the initial stages of coming to know a particular story, he is more of a receiver of the story's text than a reactor to it. One may speculate that children who are provided with few opportunities to ask questions during the joint book event or who are asked few questions may not be getting the same learning chance to understand the importance of questioning in reading.

However an overabundance of questions could be detrimental to the overall effect of the story. Doake (1981) noted that for his early readers, the adults "were sensitive to just how many questions they could ask before the child would lose interest" (p.230).

The quality of interaction appears to be of importance. Good inflection and a reading pace which encouraged participation were noted by Doake (1981). This same researcher found that pausing during reading to allow for dialogue or prediction on the part of the child was evident and that overall a warm, supportive atmosphere was central to the child's literacy awareness, confirming Flood's (1977) contention that what is beneficial to the child is a reading style which fosters verbal interaction between reader and listener. Harkness & Miller (1982) contend that familiarity with the story also affects the quality of the interaction. Initially the mother, in their study, used the story as a support to the dialogue but once the child became more familiar with the story context, the text was read in larger chunk. Therefore the youngster was provided with definite examples of text as having their own identity, separate to and different from oral speech. The dialogue when inserted, does not detract from the function of the print; rather it may make the child more sensitive to the fact that print is more than speech written down, different from oral language and unique unto itself.

If Feuerstein's (1979) contention is correct that mediated learning experiences heighten a child's cognitive awareness of the stimulus and provide for a greater probability of transfer to other situations, one may suggest that adults who act as stimulating and supportive mediators within the joint book episode encourage their children to react to print in an effective and economical manner; they provide intentionality and transcendence (see Figure 2). Children who enter Grade One classrooms demonstrate a wide variety of literacy competencies--some read fluently, grasping the author's intent with little difficulty; others have minimal knowledge of print, scarcely recognizing their own printed names. It is suggested therefore, that the varying degrees in literacy awareness are due, in part, to the quality and quantity of mediated print experiences in general and in particular within joint book events.

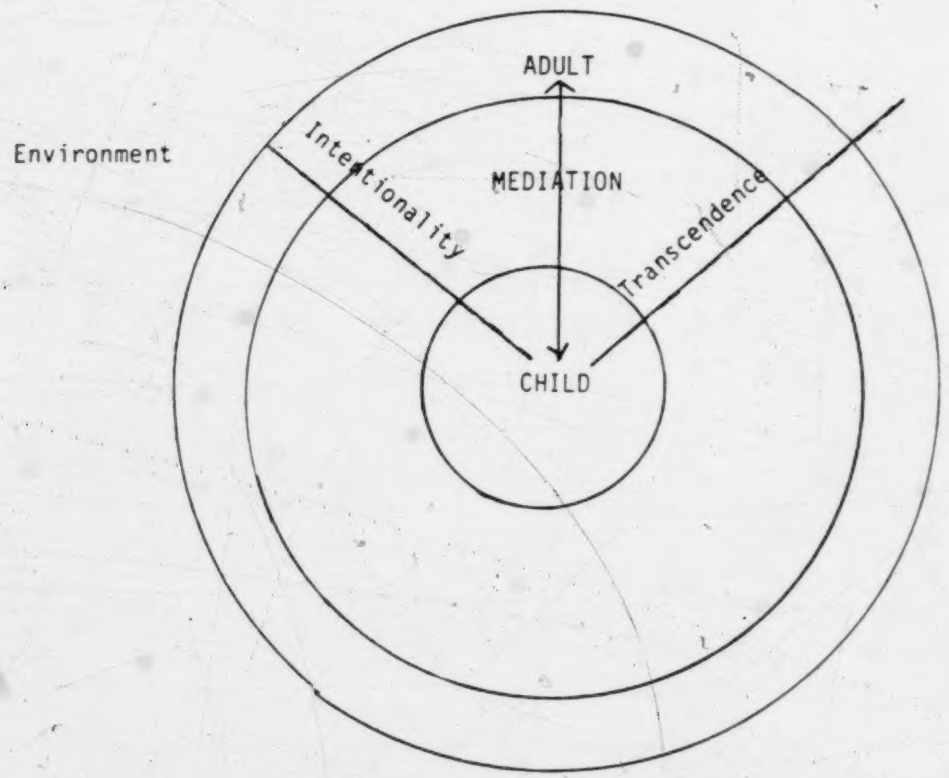


Figure 2: The Basics of a Mediated Learning Experience

B. Interpsychological Factors

The intentionality characteristic of a MLE marks the child as an active participant. Teale (1982) contends that the early stages of reading are conducted interpsychologically, i.e. "in the interactions between the literate person(s) and the preschooler, and speech is what enables literacy to be conducted interpsychologically" (p.560). Although speech is not seen as being necessary for a MLE to take place, (Feuerstein, 1979), it would seem reasonable to suggest that speech is the most effective and efficient method for facilitating a MLE within a literacy event.

"Once book reading starts, the child uses his established skills for dialogue in order to engage in a structured exchange on non-concrete topics" (Ninio and Bruner, 1978, p.6). The social rules he has learned, the reciprocity element of the dialogue which has dominated the everyday exchanges between him and his mother or other literate adult carry over to the book reading event. The turn taking of every day speech surfaces within the speech the participants employ as they discuss the story being read. Heath (1982), Ninio and Bruner (1978), and Snow (1983) found similarities between the dialgoue which exists in non-reading events and the speech carried on in book reading situations. Snow (1983) notices three particular characteristics of social interaction--scaffolding, semantic contingency, and accountability procedures (major facilitators of language acquisition) which can be identified clearly when parents and children share a story.

Scaffolding refers to narrowing or "reducing the degrees of freedom" (Snow, 1983, p.170) by the adult so that the child may concentrate more fully upon the skill he is attempting to acquire. As the child demonstrates competencies at the endeavour, the scaffolding self-destructs. The adult, as it were, dangles a psychological carrot in front of the child which assists him in reaching his goal. As Teale (1982) has noted, scaffolding is an interpsychological activity. When the child experiences success and becomes somewhat more capable of completing or carrying out the task for himself, a transfer from the interpsychological to the intrapsychological takes place. Scaffolding may therefore be seen as a support system which assists the child in his attempt to be self-sufficient.

Semantic contingency (Snow, 1983) refers to the adult continuing a topic introduced by the child's previous utterance (p.167). Teale (1982) in quoting Scollen and Scollen's 1981 analysis of the literacy development of their two-year-old daughter, refers to the same principle as "vertical constructions" (p.565). The child introduces a topic which is commented upon or responded to by the adult, which in turn leads the child to a further response or comment. The main feature of semantic contingency is that it is the child and not the adult who introduces or initiates (Snow, 1983). This same researcher indicates that semantically contingent speech may include--a) expansions; b) semantic extensions which add breadth and depth to the topic under discussion; c) clarifying questions which seek to highlight what the child has just said and d) answers to questions posed by the child (Snow, 1983, p.167).

Although the child is required to be the initiator of the topic for semantic contingency to take place according to Snow (1983), it may be a viable 'teaching' technique for the parent within the dialogue in a joint book reading event. Certain words, pictures or events may be somewhat confusing to the child and as the parent is highly tuned to what the child does or does not know, the parent may initiate some dialogue concerning that confusion in order to alleviate it. Overall, because the story itself is what is under discussion, one may suggest that explanations or expansions, or the questioning of an idea within that story, albeit introduced by the adult, have an aspect of semantic contingency, if not in the pure sense proposed above. It would appear reasonable to suggest that in joint book reading, much of the dialgoue is initiated by the adult who is very much aware of the child's background knowledge and experience and is in an advantageous position to know when and where to interpose himself between what the book is saying and what the child may grasp cognitively. To broaden the concept of semantic contingency—introduction of a topic by either participant, appears to be reasonable in view of the usual turn-taking in general conversation.

In addition, further nebulousness exists in Snow's (1983) definition of semantic contingency. There may be the case where the parent does not immediately respond to the child's query as he introduces a topic. Rather the adult holds off as it were, to comment at a later stage. Snow (1983) does not account for this kind of interaction. The reasons for the tardiness could be many and varied—perhaps the adult feels the child knows the response to his own question; perhaps a response would give away the 'punch line of the story;' maybe the adult feels the necessary response would lead to a detraction from the story, etc. One may suggest therefore, that there are two forms of semantic contingency--immediate, which refers directly to the previous utterance by either participant and non-immediate which includes a reference to a topic introduced earlier or to the overall story itself.

The third characteristics of social interaction--accountability, is indicated when the adult demands or insists that the task at hand be completed. The parent requires the child to demonstrate that he knows what the adult knows he knows. Within joint book reading, the adult as Ninio and Bruner (1978) have shown, coaxes the child to show more sophisticated behavior than he is presently showing. Within accountability, the parent leads the child rather than following his initiative.

It is proposed therefore, that the three characteristics--scaffolding, semantic contingency in a broad context and accountability, provide for an informal teaching situation, i.e. mediated learning experience, which supports the child in his search for independence in literacy.

Within a MLE which occurs in a joint book event, the above three strategies are considered to be the most effective tools for promoting cognitive development. Employing transcendence and intentionality as the psychological features and semantic contingency, scaffolding, and accountability as the linguistic factors, a view of emergent reading as a social interaction phenomenon may be more fully understood. It is proposed that the interactions between the participants are mutually constructed in light of the psychological and linguistic features of that interaction.

Within the joint book experience, there is a speaker (reader) and a listener. Sufficient voice volume, adequate articulation and syntactical accurateness are necessary on the part of the reader to provide the listener with adequate quality of speech to perceive the message. There is however, the factor of the content of the message.

The speaker may produce an utterance for which the listener may require more information in order to understand what is meant by that utterance.

In the joint reading situation, it may not be surprising to find the child listener seeking clarification. Such communication has as its broad purpose the sharing of information and the development of a love of literature. In such an event, maintaining dialogue may be of lesser importance. The sharing by the parent may be seen more as an informing or informal teaching episode since the child needs or desires to obtain as much information as possible to facilitate his comprehension of the story.

Although some research has dealt with adults seeking clarification from their children during discourse (Gallagher, 1981; Van Kleeck and Gunter, 1982), little documentation exists for the other direction, namely child to adult. An understanding of clarification types in general may assist in understanding the techniques a youngster may use to further his awareness of the world around him.

Garvey (1977) described four types of clarification requests which listeners use in respect to their understanding of the message: a) repetition of all or part of the utterance, b) confirmation, whereby some facet of the meaning of the message is confirmed, c) specification, which focusses towards some specific piece of information and d) elaboration wherein the speaker is asked to expand upon his message so that the listener may have a deeper understanding of the speaker's intent. This same researcher identified, as a result of her study with adults and three- to five-year-old children in a free play situation, that repetition, confirmation, specification and elaboration were the techniques used by adults to elicit clarifying information from their offspring. With younger children, the findings of the study indicated that the adults used more requests for repetition than for confirmation or specification, while with older children, an equal number of different kinds of requests were utilized by the adults.

In 1981, Van Kleeck and Gunter using Garvey's (1977) clarification classification investigated the clarification requests of twenty observer and twenty non-observer mothers as their two-year-old children participated in a mock birthday party. Results indicated that each group differed significantly. Non-observer mothers used a significantly smaller number of total utterances and a lower proportion of requests than observer adults. Those who were present at the birthday party used significantly more requests for specification with non-observers using more requests for repetition and confirmation.

The function of the clarification requests may be interpreted therefore as a desire to find out more information about the subject under discussion. Depending upon the shared understanding of those participating in the dialogue, one may presume that the questioning strategy will vary. For example, familiarity with the content and context of the story being read may encourage more requests for specification than any of the other three techniques. Alternately a new story might provide for more instances for a strategy of confirmation. While the function of the clarification request may vary according to the context of the situation, it is suggested that variance may also be found in the form in which the request is posed.

Pellegrini (1982) investigated the extent adult-child verbal interaction had on the youngster's concept of objects. This researcher referred to three 'conceptual conflict strategies:' a) declarative, b) convergent and c) opening questioning. Each requires a different level of interaction from the child.

Within the declarative strategy, the child passively repeats the descriptors presented by the adult. Some of the object's attributes are provided which may not be in harmony with present understanding of the object. Conceptual conflict ensues which is resolved as the descriptors are repeated, thereby expanding and enriching his schema of the object. The process of analyzing and describing the object's multidimensionality is the adult's task however. The child does experience difficulty when seeking to focus in on a novel object's attributes as the process of analysis has not been mastered.

The second strategy, convergent questioning, requires a specific answer from the child. Particular characteristics of the object are highlighted by the adult and the youngster is encouraged to answer convergently to certain provided alternatives. "What colour is it?", "Is it rough?" Pellegrini (1982) contends that within this interrogative strategy, the child is still passive as he is not "verbally encoding the object's attributes" (p.70).

Open-questioning as an interrogative strategy compells the child to focus upon and analyze the object's many attributes. The child is made aware in the search for differences and likenesses that the object is not unidimensional but multidimensional in character and becomes actively involved in the learning. "How does it feel?"; "How are the two things the same?" With such open questioning techniques, children are encouraged to view the object from a variety of angles as they describe the attributes in their own words. As a result of his study, Pellegrini (1982) contends that the open questioning strategy is the "most effective facilitator of associative fluency" (p.74) and unlike either of the other two strategies, enables children to transfer analytical processes to novel situations. One may speculate that this technique forces children to be actively involved in their search for the unique attributes of an object on the one hand, and its multidimensionality on the other.

As the parent reads with the child, one may suggest that the form of the questioning strategy will also vary. The open questioning technique may allow for greater dialogue between the dyads, encouraging the child to conceptualize how events within the story may be related to his own experience. Such an interrogative strategy may allow children to take decontextualized print and contextualize it to their own background knowledge thereby moving closer to an understanding of the author's intent. If as Pellegrini (1982) contends that how the adult seeks clarification has an impact on children's cognitive growth, a variety of forms and functions within clarification requests should assist children to develop literacy awareness.

Hayden and Fagan (1983) conducted a study involving five mothers and their kindergarten children and analyzed the nature of the interaction during a joint book experience. Influenced by previous research they developed a system within which the nature of the parent-child interactions might be described. The resulting system included two major categories: clarifying requests and responses. The former category was subdivided into form and function.

These categories appeared to be satisfactory for analyzing the nature of interaction between parents and children. Results from the study indicated that while neither partner differed greatly in the nature of the function of his request, considerable difference was found in the form to express requests for clarification.

It is suggested therefore that it is not the story itself which may account for emergent reading, although there is no doubt that quality materials as opposed to poorly written texts may have some impact upon the child as he listens. Furthermore talking about the story before, during and after the reading may assist the child to focus upon the content of the work but the quality of that interaction may not encourage the development of an understanding that print is normally decontextualized and that text decreases one's reliance on a present context of interaction. It is true that the story should be enjoyed for its own intrinsic pleasure--the flow of words, the humanness of its characters together with the drama and excitement of the episodes. It is suggested that parents within the reading event who employ those similar strategies which encourage oral language acquisition may be informally fostering a mindful and cognizant approach to written language acquisition. Moving from the 'here and now' to the 'there and then' may demonstrate to the child that what takes place within the story may be related to one's one past and future experiences (transcendence). In making evident their own pleasure in the reading act, by focussing upon certain key facets of the story, etc., parents may indicate vicariously their own goals and purposes--that reading is to be enjoyed and is more than an oral production of the story's words. The child may demonstrate his reciprocity by cuddling up closer in order to better see and hear, smiling or verbally interacting (intentionality). As the story interaction proceeds, adults and children seek clarification and resolve confusion. Thus a joint book experience involves both linguistic and psychological factors (see Figure 3).

It is somewhat surprising that so little is known about the specific nature of these interactions or strategies when one considers the results of investigations such as those produced by Schickedanz and Sullivan (1984). They note that story reading was the most frequent activity related to literacy and although it was not the only event which focussed upon literacy situations in the families under study, the bed-time story was the families' most common literacy ritual (p.8).

It may be hypothesized that the questions posed and the responses given within the joint book dialogue by either participant may point to the use of these strategies as informal teaching techniques which potentially encourage emergent reading.

C. The Nature of the Context

"In early reading development, for example, the parent structures storybook reading so that the child knows what it *feels like* to read a book with comprehension long before the child can perform the task alone" (Sulzby, 1981, p.1[illegible]. Wells (1982) in his longitudinal study of

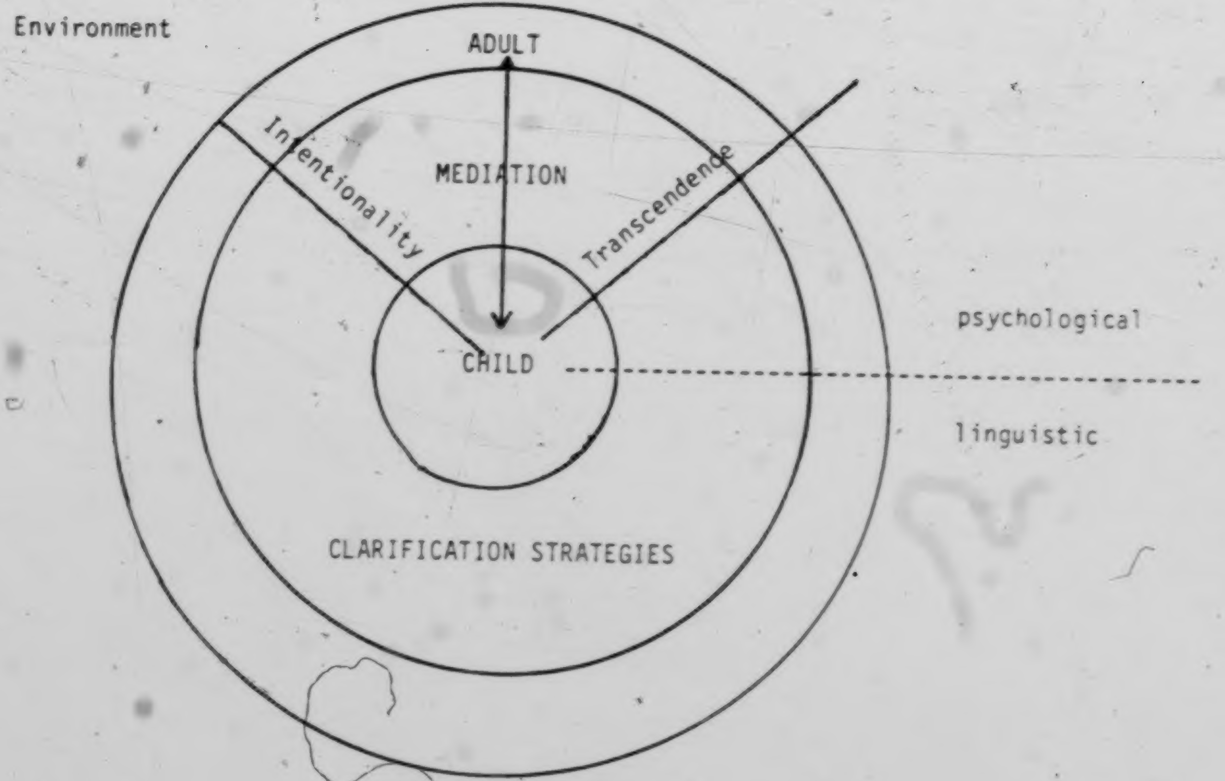

Environment
ADULT
MEDIATION
Intentionality
Transcendence
CHILD
psychological
linguistic
CLARIFICATION STRATEGIES

Figure 3: The Psycholinguistic Dimensions of a Mediated Learning Experience

32 children which sought to investigate how differences in early language development accounted for differences in success between children at age seven, found that only listening to stories as a preschool activity related to reading, was significantly associated with later language success. Furthermore, listening to stories correlated significantly with a) knowledge about literacy upon entry to school, b) reading comprehension at seven years of age, and c) an oral language section of teacher assessment at age five. One may suggest therefore, that listening to and responding to stories provides a dynamic opportunity for parent and child to interact.

What is it about listening to stories that makes it such a crucial component for later literacy development? As Wells (1982) has noticed, the learning which takes place when looking at picture books or magazines relies most heavily upon primarily the naming of the objects. The child is presented with a vehicle to display his knowledge in a limited way. While it may be true that a picture is worth a thousand words, a picture does not give the whole story. There is no doubt that some parents possess the ability to 'make' a story from the pictures. Experience seems to suggest however, that for the majority of adults, itemizing or labeling the objects within the picture would be an acceptable activity for them and their children.

The young child encounters a myriad of print in non-book contexts. All around him, when he's out for a walk, shopping, eating a meal or watching television, he is confronted by labels of one kind or another. His curiosity is aroused and he asks what these signs mean; in some instances, the similarity between labels is pointed out to him. The adult names letters, helps him to read words on cereal boxes, billboards or other environmental signs. Within such interactions the child is actively involved. But one must consider that decoding labels and other signs in the environment is a process quite distant from that involved in reading text which is encapsulated within a story. The "S" on Safeway or the words "Drug Store" on a pharmacy window are contextualized and demand less of a cognitive leap on the part of the child to attain meaning from them than do the words in a story. By their physical presence, the words and letters denote their context. They are a visible sign of the meaning attributed to them. Just as the very young child speaks of the here and now when he interacts with his parents, so too when he first becomes aware of print, his focus is also on the here and now, i.e. contextualized print. The high degree of context assists him in obtaining meaning from the words. But as Snow (1983) contends "moving from such highly contextualized reading (which many would deny is truly reading) to relatively decontextualized reading, such as reading words in isolation or reading sentences in a book where the pictures cannot be mapped easily to elements within the text, involves a real transition" (p.1975).

It is proposed therefore that it is the story which provides the child with the nucleus of an idea that print is in essence decontextualized and only a symbolic representation of an idea, event or an object. The clues to the interpretation of the text are in the text itself. Scollon and Scollon (1979) state that "the prosodic structures of stories read aloud provide an intermediate prosody between spoken discourse and written discourse. As the prosodic contextualization cues are leveled in this form of reading, the child becomes more and more dependent on the grammar to provide meaning, especially learning about the information structure of the text" (p.13).

In a story, things happen--Jack builds a house, Mary goes to the zoo, the princess marries the handsome prince. Within the 'once upon a time' framework, the participants, reader and child, are provided with ample opportunity to ask questions and seek explanations which go well beyond the simple naming of objects. The questions in turn require responses either from the child or the adult who reads for him, questions and answers which focus upon the causes of actions, the resolution of conflicts, the sequences of episodes. The story may demonstrate the human endeavors which the child, in his own experiendes, may encounter in different if more simple situations. Because of the story book exposure, his own experiences take on new meaning and a new focus. He can identify the consequences of story book character actions and anticipate the outcomes; he can consider the motives and emotions of the characters as they relate to this own experience. In other words, the story book is alive with the richness of human experience, translated and adapted by the adult reader-mediator.

Such occasions for dynamic verbal interactions may be a far cry from the kinds of language generated by an interest in environmental print. If one views the story as a means by which the child can gain knowledge of the meaning-getting building organization of the written word itself, one may suggest that the simple reading of the story itself is not sufficient to promote cognitive awareness of print as a meaning-getting activity. The parent who uses the story as a spring board for demonstrating the richness of print and the pleasure one can derive from it may be preparing the child in a very subtle way to reach out on his own to this dynamic and exciting feature of human experience.

Certain features contained within the text permit the youngster easier access to the concept of decontextualization. The historical context of words which comes about when the child has heard a story many times helps support the reading act. For example his experience with "some event, place, word or text which can support (his) current interpretation or reaction" (Snow, 1983, p.175) provide him with memory clues that make the text more meaningful.

Another feature which leads to an awareness of the decontextualization of print is that of routines. Spencer (1975) states "the conventions of the telling build up the anticipations which guarantee the child's understanding of the kinds of materials that are being handled" (p.20). Routines allow the child to demonstrate his competency in that certain kinds of books are predictive in their format. Dr. Seuss editions with their predictive nonsense rhymes, ABC books which present a letter with an object to identify it with, books which demand completion of sentences by the child, in their own way are very similar to others of their genre. Because of their highly predictive routines, the child is able to use his own memory as support system in the reading act.

Scollon and Scollon (1979) contend that the fictionalization of self, the ability to distance oneself from a participatory role in the event is a necessary component for the successful reader. What is happening in the text is not in reality happening to the reader although the experiences therein have their meaning within the reader. The psychological distance between the writer and reader (listener) and the distant setting of the story itself are facets of decontextualization which the child must come to grips with. Within the story reading, the youngster is coaxed to understand the point of view of the writer, to relate the location of the story and to do so through the medium of written speech which in many cases is much more complex than that which he hears daily.

In presenting a child with the opportunity to fictionalize self, to hear a more abstract language and to relate to situations beyond the here and now, the adult who reads stories to his child is familiarizing him with the deeper components of literacy awareness.

In school the child needs to engage in "disembedded thinking" (Donaldson, 1978). Such thinking often does not have the support of the context of an ongoing activity. Rather it is the language itself which brings meaning to the context. Therefore the child must pay careful attention to the verbal message rather than the context in which it is rooted. In other words, the child must develop the ability to comprehend language in a decontextualized setting. Wells (1983) noted that while children's oral language did not differ significantly on entry to school regardless of the social status of the parents, as "soon as the children entered school the picture changed dramatically" (p.70). Wells (1983) contends that on one dimension of language use--literacy--significant differences were evident. He believes that the root cause for the differences in successful achievement in school is related to the place and value that literacy plays in family life. While some of the subjects in this longitudinal study were exposed to, i.e. had been read, a 1000 books a year (on an average of three a day), others had not been read to at all. Therefore one may assume that for the latter children the opportunities to encounter decontextualized print were minimal at best. Language for those youngsters would be context-bound, embedded in the on-going activity of ordinary everyday experiences.

Admittedly, outside of the realm of print experiences, children may be provided with opportunities to expand their decontextualized thinking such as when they talk about past events, or plan a future outing, etc. However it would appear that books and the ideas contained within them provide ideal media for enhancing 'disembedded thinking' for to understand what is happening between the pages, the child has to move from the 'here and now' to the 'there and then.'

Wells (1983) contends that listening to stories helps the child to develop an understanding of decontextualized print as it is only the language therein which brings meaning to the child; he has to pay close attention to the words themselves; he has to make connections between what he knows and what the words are indicating; contextual support can only be found within the print. Unlike environmental print, book print stands alone as it were, without the support of visual props. Although the pictures which accompany the words assist in contextualizing the text, it is the words which convey the author's message. The reading of stories provides the child with a mental framework or schema that print can exist of itself, that it is permanent and unchanging and that what has been carved in stone may be returned to time and time again. While environmental print may bring the child towards this realization, of itself it would not appear to be sufficient.

What better way to focus upon the element of print as being decontextualized than through the medium of a story written to delight the imagination? Demers & Moyles (1982) in their historical review of children's literature note that the development of story books moved "from instruction to delight" (p.11). Prior to the middle of the eighteenth century, books which were written for children focussed upon instruction in religion and moral conduct. In 1744, John Newbury published what is considered today to be a landmark in children's literature, A Pretty Little Pocket Book. Intended for middle class children, the Pocket Book was an "illustrated catalogue of children's amusements based on the alphabet" (Demers & Moyles, 1982, p.105).

> Here's great K and L
> Pray Dame, Can you tell
> Who put Pig-Hog
> Down the Well? (p.106).

Newbury, as an astute and keen businessman published dozens of titles, e.g. The Book of Books for Children, and The History of Little Goody Two Shoes which contained one hundred and forty pages of adventure and amusement. Because of his success and example, the production of children's books increased dramatically. With the new focus upon delight rather than instruction, publishers and writers became aware of the new marketable product--entertainment of the young. The proliferation of children's books since the beginning of this century is often referred to as the Golden Age of children's literature--books written for children, "works of imagination, clothed in delight" (Demers & Moyles, 1982, p.82).

The availability of stories for children today is nothing short of incredible. Libraries abound with them. Grocery stores sell them. Children's television programs present them. Book clubs promote them. Admittedly not all are what could be termed 'quality' literature but most are at least acceptable. They come in all sizes and shapes, from tiny to large, illustrated in a myriad of colours to a plain black and white format. The print varies from the regular size found in adult books to bold and colourful words splashed across a page. The child today is not exposed to just one kind of book. He has a wealth of literature to choose from.

Research concerning book experiences prior to school entry has been the focus of attention for many investigators. Some studies have focussed on one child (Crago and Crago, 1983; Harkness & Miller, 1982; Ninio & Bruner, 1978; Snow, 1982). Others have compared a small group of children (Clark, 1976; Doake, 1981; Schickendanz & Sullivan, 1984). Still other researchers have investigated larger numbers of children in their communities (Heath, 1982), in school (Cochran-Smith, 1983), and at home and school (Martinez and Roser, 1985).

Holdaway (1979) contends that "children with a background of book experiences since infancy develop a complex range of attitudes, concepts, and skills predisposing them to literacy. They are likely to continue into literacy on entering school with a minimum of discontinuity" (p.49).

What do we know of the degree of book experiences in the home? Durkin (1966) notes that one of her subjects, Carol, had 75 books some of which were alphabet and picture dictionaries. It may be presumed that the remainder were of a story-type nature. Doake (1981) remarks that Gillian had 140 books, Karen and Shean 70 and Jennifer 194 in their own personal libraries. One may consider that these children have ample access to decontextualized print. Other researchers noted that their subjects made use of public libraries (Clark, 1976; King and Friesen, 1972). In fact a predominant feature of the homes of early readers, in all the investigations, was a richly endowed book environment. Books were accessible for the children to pick from whenever they wished, not just at bed time. Books were read to them and books were read by the adults in the home. It could be said that books formed an integral part of the homes of early readers.

Perhaps one of the most impressive and influential studies of book experiences is that carried out by Doake (1981). Four children were visited in their homes for a total of fifty-six times during which audio recordings were made. The children ranged in age from 2 years 11 months to 5 years 5 months. Interviews, questionnaires, field notes and parental daily records were also taken. The researcher's findings included the following:

a) The practice of reading to children was the starting point of emergent reading behavior.

b) Parents did not see home reading as contributing to their children's reading development.

c) As the children became familiar with certain favourite books, they practiced their own reading-like behavior--mumble reading, echo reading, etc.

d) Children developed an awareness that books could be objects of delight and enjoyment.

e) Children built a schema for different kinds of stories.

f) While children primarily chose favourite stories to be read again and again, parents were more prone to select a new one or one infrequently read.

g) Parents encouraged and supported verbal interactions during the joint story book event.

Heath (1982) in her longitudinal study of two communities found that those families which did not expose their children to books and did not encourage the youngsters to use book meanings to make sense of their environment were the same families whose offspring had difficulty in school. In other words, these children were not able to cope with the decontextualized language of the school.

The evidence is fairly conclusive: joint book episodes carried out in the home assist children in their spontaneous development towards literacy. With the book as a prop, as the central medium for enjoyment and discussion, parents, albeit unknowingly, provide structures for their children which enable them to experience print in a unique fashion. Through oral language, the adult mediates the printed words so that it becomes meaningful, in an experiential way, to the child on his lap. "Once upon a time . . ." and they are off, off to a place and time which exist only in print. The reader knows that Little Red Riding Hood will meet the wolf; the child knows it too. But no matter how often the story is read, Little Red Riding Hood never knows at the beginning of the story that she is going to meet the wolf. Slowly the child becomes aware that the printed word is unchanging. One may suspect that it is this awareness which makes the book the child's favourite. He has the upper hand on the characters in the book. He knows it all and they do not. This same awareness leads him on his cognitive journey to literacy. Print is constant and exists of itself. Only our interpretation of it may change.

How is the child led to an interpretation of the tale? How can he learn that what happens between the pages is 'out of context' and to be understood must be related to his own experience? One may suspect that the strategies used to interpret decontextualized print and those used to assist the child to understand or control contextualized print may be quite different. Much may depend on the genre of the story, the familiarity with the text, the child's interest and the parental underlying desire to create a context for interpretation. One may therefore ask how it is that the adult provides a sense-building support system for the child as they share a story together?

Thus in addition to the sociopsychological and linguistic nature of a joint book reading experience, the content of the reading must also be considered. The general factors that appear to be essential for emergent literacy are presented in Figure 4.

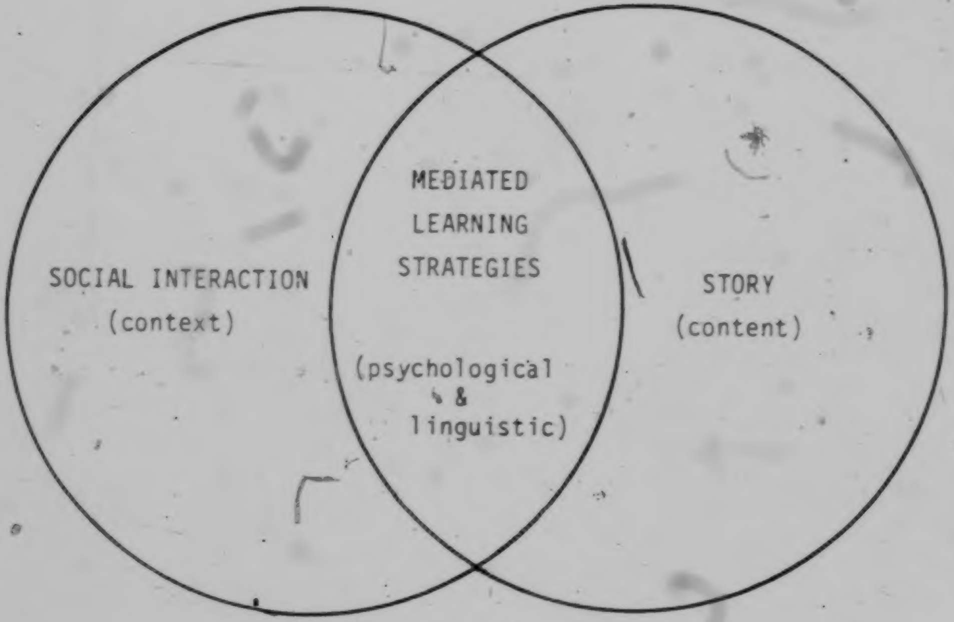

MEDIATED
LEARNING
STRATEGIES
(psychological
&
linguistic)
SOCIAL INTERACTION
(context)
STORY
(content)

Figure 4: The Centrality of Mediated Learning Strategies Within a Joint Book Experience

CHAPTER IV

THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

The design of the study is the subject of this chapter. Divided into five parts, the chapter will describe the sample selection, the instruments fundamental to the study, the pilot study, data collection and coding and the analysis.

THE SAMPLE

The sample for the study consisted of 27 Kindergarten children, 20 fathers, and 20 mothers. The school district from which the Kindergarten sample was chosen was comprised of six elementary schools and one high school covering a large geographical area of both rural and urban communities. After permission was granted by the district's superintendent to conduct the study, lists of children from four separate Kindergartens were obtained. Two of the Kindergartens were comprised of both morning and afternoon classes, while the remainder each had one morning class. The total number of students enrolled in all Kindergartens from which the sample was chosen was 144 children. The names of the students were randomized and the parents of the selected students were then contacted by telephone by the researcher according to this order.

Where both parents indicated that reading to their children was a usual experience for them and that they were willing to participate in the study, both were selected as adult subjects. If however only one parent in the home usually performed the task of reading to the child, and also demonstrated an interest in participating, that parent was selected. After 20 fathers and 20 mothers had agreed to participate, the telephoning was discontinued.

Thirteen of the children selected were read to by both parents, with fourteen being read to by one parent. In the latter group, seven were read to by fathers, seven by mothers. Although the sex of the children was not a variable in the study, it should be noted that there were eleven boys and sixteen girls. Ages ranged from 4 years 7 months to 5 years 9 months. Although some of the children attended French Immersion classes, all students and their reader parents were native English speakers. Thirteen of the children were the oldest or only child in the family, thirteen were middle children and seven were the youngest. No child subject was a Kindergarten repeater, and all child subjects lived with both of their parents at the time of the data gathering. The socio-economic status of the parents was that of rural and urban middle class. Twelve of the mothers were employed either part-time or full-time outside the home.

DATA COLLECTION

A. Story Reading

During the initial contact by telephone, the parents were informed about the purpose and nature of the task and gave their consent to participate.

The task consisted of having the parents read three stories to their children--a library book chosen by the researcher, a familiar story chosen by the child and an unfamiliar story chosen by the researcher. A package was then prepared for each parent participant. It included a covering letter (see Appendix C) again explaining the overall purpose of the study together with the suggestions for selecting the child's familiar story. Included also were the library book borrowed by the researcher from the local library which was deemed suitable for a Kindergarten child and an unfamiliar story. Three blank audio cassette tapes were also included in the package.

In the majority of the cases, these packages were delivered to the families via the school and returned via the same route to the researcher. Children who were to be read to by both parents therefore took two separate packages home, while 'single' children received one. When audio cassette recorders were requested by the parents, the packages and tape recorders were taken to the child's home by the researcher.

To provide unfamiliar stories for reading, two less well known fairy tales by Grimm--The Three Spinners and King Grisly Beard--were selected by the researcher (see Appendix E). The original stories were altered slightly in order to make the texts more suitable to the modern child. Illustrations were drawn for each page of text and the stories were bound by a professional bindery so that the tales would look as much like any other story book with which the children might come in contact. The finished products measured six and a half inches by eight inches, bound, with the titles in gold lettering on the covers. Tape recordings were made of all three readings. When both parents within a family were participating, they read different selections for a), b) and c). In other words, some children had six different stories read to them on separate occasions, while those youngsters who had only one parent participating were involved in three stories.

When the parents had completed readings and recordings, the packages were returned. The child's favourite or familiar story was included at this point so that the researcher might have an opportunity to note the text of this book. This story was subsequently sent back to the child. Permission slips for the Concepts About Print Test accompanied the tapes and books.

Although three tape recordings were made by each participating parent, only two were transcribed verbatim and their resulting data analyzed. The tape recording which was made of the reading of the book from the local library was not used for data in this study; rather it was used as a "warm-up" for the participants and to help relieve any anxiety which may have occurred from asking them to tape record a family experience.

Once the recordings were returned to the researcher, arrangements were made with the various school authorities to administer the Concepts About Print Test with the child participants. When the students had completed the test, interviews with the parents were carried out. In other words, no test was given before parent interviews which in turn were not carried out until recordings of the stories had been completed.

B. Concepts About Print Test

Each of the 27 children was assessed for his knowledge about print using a Concepts About Print Test (Brailsford, 1985). At the convenience of the Kindergarten teacher, each child was individually administered the test during regular school hours in his/her home school. A private room was provided by the schools' administration for the testing sessions. After spending some time chatting about various child-related interests and having identified the tester as the person who had asked "mom and dad to read stories with the tape recorder on," the children relaxed and appeared to enjoy the sessions, each of which lasted approximately 30 minutes.

The Concepts About Print Test (Shared Book Task) consisted of a book which was written by the above author. The 17 page story revolved around two suburban children and their mother preparing to go to a local swimming pool, their activities at the pool, and their subsequent return home. Each page of the book was illustrated with coloured photographs which related to the print on the page. The researcher had this book bound by a professional bindery in order to alleviate any confusion as to its similarity to a photograph album and to make it similar in appearance to the books read at home.

Scoring procedures as outlined by Brailsford (1985) were followed. Percentage scores ranged from 20% to 92%. Children scoring above the median of 65% were identified as High Print Aware children and those below that score as Low Print Aware children.

C. Interviews

Twenty parents were interviewed in order to ascertain their own reading background, the availability of children's books in the home, the child's reading background and behaviours and how the parents thought children became readers.

Each single participating parent was interviewed. The parent who read most frequently with the child where both parents participated was the one chosen to provide this background information.

The interviews followed an open-ended format although certain leading questions were at times posed to provide a general framework (see Appendix B).

Fifty percent of the interviews were carried out by telephone. This was due to the fact that these parents lived up to 40 miles from the researcher's home and weather conditions did not permit distant travel. Other parents were interviewed at their homes. In the case of dual participants in the family, only the adult being interviewed was present. On several occasions, however, whether on the phone or at home, confirmation on a particular point was sometimes asked for by the adult from his/her spouse.

Each interview lasted from 45 minutes to an hour. The tone of the sessions was generally very favourable and relaxed as the parents demonstrated a willingness to offer information. The researcher took notes during the interviews as it was felt that the presence of a tape recorder might have an inhibiting affect on the participants in their discussions of personal information.

PILOT STUDY

An earlier study conducted by Hayden and Fagan (1983) served as a pilot for devising a category system for analyzing the joint book interactions. However on the basis of the expanded data in the main study, this category system was modified and extended for the data coding (see Appendix A for definitions).

DATA CODING

A. Joint Book Interactions

After all tape recordings of the joint book interactions had been completed, a verbatim transcription of the protocols was carried out by the researcher which in turn was rechecked with the cassette tapes for accuracy. The number of text words for each familiar story was recorded. Topic units were identified. These were units of thought which deal with a subject or topic that was generated by the text but did not include the text of the story. Within the topic units, message units were identified. Kontos (1981) defines message units "as single meaningful statements or questions" (p.10) which may also include single word utterances, that is, statements or questions about a topic. The message units were in turn analyzed according to a revised system of the clarification strategies derived by Hayden and Fagan (1984). The revisions are presented below.

Interaction Strategies

1. Clarifying Requests

Function	Form
1. Reproduction	1. Declarative Question
2. Confirmation	2. Convergent Simple Question
3. Specification	3. Convergent Choice Question
4. Elaboration	4. Convergent Leading Question
5. Text Prediction	5. Signification Question
6. Text Direction	6. Open-Ended Question
	7. Text Hesitation Question
	8. Text Command Question

2. Responses

Function	Form
1. Reinforcement	1. Repetition Response
2. Confirmation	2. Yes/No Response
3. Non-Confirmation	3. Declarative Simple Response
4. Specification	4. Declarative Extended Response
5. Elaboration	5. Text Recognition
6. Text Completion	
7. Text Critique	
8. Text Focus	

(see Appendix A for definitions).

Each message unit was itemized as to its function and form within either of the two main focusses--requests and responses. Total raw scores for each individual, whether parent or child, were tabulated and assigned a value of 1. Thus there was no assumption regarding the importance of one strategy compared to another with respect to weighting.

To ensure that the familiar stories were comparable in length and therefore to control for the text input which may have affected the quantity of dialogue, a series of t-tests were computed to establish whether or not differences between the familiar samples read for mothers and fathers were statistically significant. Results revealed no differences. Additional t-tests were performed for familiar/unfamiliar texts. Results demonstrated high significance as presented in Table 1.

Table 1

t Test for Differences Between Familiar and Unfamiliar Stories

	Mean	Mean Dif	Std Dev	t-stat	p
Familiar Story	994.35				
		-364.15	564.74	-4.078	.0002
unfamiliar story	1358.5				

In order therefore to control for the fact that the number of strategies might be reflective of the length of the text read, the strategies within the Request-Function group were converted to proportions of the total number of strategies within that group. The proportion score is an indication of which strategy in a group was used more frequently than others within that group. Proportionate scores were similarly calculated for Request-Form, Response-Function and Response-Form.

An interrater reliability of 91% agreement for the assignment of message units to the category system was established between the researcher and another student.

B. Interview Data

As previously noted, the researcher took notes during the interview sessions. While the questions of the interview formed the basis for analyzing the responses, a more specific set of questions arose during the analysis of the responses. The questions around which the responses were grouped were presented in Chapter I.

Responses were nominally classified. No response was hierarchically or otherwise assigned any value. The semantic content of the responses provided the basis on which they were judged. Interrater reliability for coding from the researcher's notes and the transcriptions of the tapes was 90% agreement for two independent raters.

DATA ANALYSIS

Statistical Analysis

The forty parents comprising the adult subjects for the study were divided into two equal groups of 20 fathers and 20 mothers. The children subjects comprised a third group of 27 individuals. Thirteen of the children were read to by both parent's; fourteen were read to by one parent. Thus each parent was matched by a single child.

The data for each subject were key punched onto IBM cards. Individuals were given an identification number, a designation as to whether he/she was a father, mother or child. In addition designation as to whether a familiar or unfamiliar story generated the dialogue was also indicated. The independent variables included parents (fathers-mothers) children read to by fathers, children read to by mothers and story type (familiar-unfamiliar). The dependent variables consisted of the interactions strategies, i.e. clarifying requests and responses.

Statistical treatment of the above data involved a two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). Based on Bray and Maxwell's (1982) interpretation of a two-step process, "the overall hypothesis of no mean differences in mean centroids for the different groups" (p.340) was tested and if found to be significant, "follow-up tests to explain group differences" were performed (p.340). Raos approximate t-tests using Wilks Lambda analysis were performed when significant differences between centroids were found.

SUMMARY

This chapter has discussed the sample selection, the instruments fundamental to the study, the pilot study, the data collection and coding and the data analysis.

Chapter V presents the statistical findings and results of the study together with a discussion of these results.

CHAPTER V

STATISTICAL DATA

This chapter presents each of the six hypotheses which were subjected to statistical analyses. After verbatim transcription, the interactions were identified as message units. Each unit was analyzed for form and function within both clarifying requests and responses. The raw scores for message units for each individual subject were noted and subsequently converted to a proportionate number of the total number rounded to two decimal places, and were treated as dependent variables. These and the independent variables (fathers/mothers, children read to by fathers/children read to by mothers, familiar and unfamiliar stories) were subjected to MANOVA procedures.

Each hypothesis is restated from Chapter I. A statement of rejection or non-rejection is given, followed by tables containing the significance of the relationship explored. Following each result presentation, each hypothesis is discussed.

HYPOTHESIS I

There will be no significant differences in the strategies employed by fathers and mothers. Specifically there will be no differences for

a) requests function

b) requests form

c) responses function

d) responses form

The hypothesis was not rejected (Table 2).

Table 2

Multivariate Analysis of Variance for

Differences in Strategies for Fathers and Mothers

Variable		df1	df2	F	p
Requests Function	0.8313	9	68	1.533	0.154
Requests Form	0.8540	10	67	1.145	0.343
Responses Function	0.8919	10	67	0.812	0.618
Responses Form	0.9039	6	71	1.258	0.288

*Probability of F = .05

Discussion

The results of the above analysis indicate that fathers and mothers did not differ significantly for the strategies they employed when interacting with their children in a joint book reading situation.

Over the past decade, considerable research has been carried out in the area of maternal speech to children (Cross, 1978; Snow & Ferguson, 1978). In addition a few studies have focussed on fathers' speech to children acquiring language (Gleason, 1975). The literature suggests that fathers are less sensitive to the child's linguistic abilities, therefore are more demanding in their questions and raise up the youngster's performance. Mothers, on the other hand, provide more linguistic support and attune their language to the child's level.

A study by Rondal (1981) also confirmed these findings. In his study which compared fathers' and mothers' speech in a story telling episode among other situations, fathers' speech was generally shorter than mothers in MLU but lexically more diverse. Fathers also asked for more requests for clarification than their spouses. It should be noted that in the Rondal study, the differences in situation--free play, story telling and the family meal--affected the quality and quantity of the parental speech. In general however, differences were found for fathers and mothers.

McLaughlin et al. (1982) refer to these differences as the "differential experience" hypothesis (p.245). They conducted a study with 24 children ranging in age from one and a half years to three and a half years in a free play situation with fathers and mothers. Their results indicated that although there were many similarities between the parents, fathers asked more WH questions related to the total number of questions than did mothers, who produced significantly higher number of yes/no questions. In addition, fathers had proportionately more repetitions than mothers. The researchers suggested that WH questions demand more from the child than yes/no questions, which confirms Pellegrini's (1982) contention that open-ended questions demand a different level of interaction from the child than convergent questioning.

Doake (1981) noted that the mothers of three of the children in his study read very quickly while the fathers of these same children read much more slowly which allowed for continual participation on the part of the youngsters (p.230).

The above findings were not confirmed statistically, as the present study found mothers and fathers employing similar strategies in their interactions during joint reading. It may be suggested therefore that the gender of the participants is not of importance. Rather it is the human mediator who places him/herself between the child and the book as they share a story together which appears to be the crucial element. It may also be argued that as the fathers and mothers were selected on the basis of their frequent reading to their children, they were comparable in their approaches to book reading with their children. That is, they had developed similar strategies as a result of frequent book reading episodes and therefore did not demonstrate significant differences for their interactions in this study.

HYPOTHESIS II

There will be no significant differences in the strategies employed by parents in familiar and unfamiliar stories. Specifically there will be no differences for

a) requests function

b) requests form

c) responses function

d) responses form

This hypothesis was rejected for Requests Function, Requests Form and Responses Function. It was not rejected for Responses Form (see Table 3).

Table 3

Multivariate Analysis of Variance for Differences in Strategies for Parents for Familiar-Unfamiliar Stories

Variable		df1	df2	F	p
Requests Function	0.7303	9	68	2.79	0.008**
Requests Form	0.7496	10	67	2.238	0.026*
Responses Function	0.6478	10	67	3.643	0.001***
Responses Form	0.8529	6	71	2.041	0.071

*Probability of F = .05   ** = .01   *** = .001

Significant differences for familiar-unfamiliar stories were found in three of the variables--Requests Function, Requests Form, and Responses Function. No differences were found for Responses Form. In order to determine more exactly where significant differences existed within each of the generic variables, that is, which strategy within each category was significant, post hoc tests using Wilks Lambda approximate t-tests were performed.

Each variable with its sub-strategies is interpreted and discussed separately.

A. Requests Function

As demonstrated by Table 4, three of the strategies within the Request Functions category were found to be significant--1) Confirmation (2b) whereby speaker 1 asks speaker 2 to confirm or negate the content of an utterance, 2) Text Prediction where the reader pauses to encourage the listener to complete the text and 3) Text Direction (a) where the speaker requests that a specific piece of text be shown or read.

Table 4

Significant Differences for Parents for Familiar and Unfamiliar Stories for Requests Function

Variable	dfl = 1.0 df2 = 76	F	p
Reproduction		3.650	0.060
Confirmation 2a		0.123	0.912
Confirmation 2b		4.383	0.040*
Specification		0.655	0.421
Elaboration		0.062	0.805
Text Prediction		8.773	0.004**
Text Direction 6a		8.773	0.004**
Text Direction 6b		2.539	0.115
Text Direction 6c		2.038	0.157

*Probability of F = .05 ** = .01 *** = .001

In order to note the direction of the significance by story type, Table 5 records the cells means for the three strategies.

Discussion

The strategies employed for familiar stories produced larger means than those for unfamiliar stories in two instances, Text Prediction and Text Direction (6a). The reverse was noted for the strategy of Confirmation.

Table 5

Parents' Familiar-Unfamiliar Requests Function Strategies

Cell means

Variables	Familiar	Unfamiliar
Confirmation (2b)	.826	.973
Text Prediction	.085	.004
Text Direction (6a)	.085	.004

These findings are supported by Harkness and Miller (1982) who noted that in the first tapings of a story between mother and child, the adult appeared to provide "a framework for the text" (p.31). They also noted that there were different interactive patterns for subsequent readings, in that the child was more aware of what was happening in the text and was able to provide details of what was occurring. Highly supported by comments offered by the mother in the first readings (their study compared readings of the same stories over time), as the text became more familiar, "support descriptions from the mother or direct responses from the child" were less evident (p.34).

Text Prediction as defined in this study reflects what Doake (1981) refers to as "completion reading"--a "technique where the reader paused at a point in the story and appropriate words were able to be given by the children to complete the phrase or sentence" (p.428). Unfortunately, as Doake himself notes, the parent readers were not asked their reasons for using such strategies. However, Doake (1981) is of the opinion that the behaviour "seemed to be an instinctive outcome of reading certain kinds of stories repeatedly" (p.437). That this behaviour was more prevalent in this study for the familiar story would appear to confirm Doake's (1981) contention.

Here it is suggested that repeated readings of familiar texts build up syntactic and semantic knowledge of that text. The pauses or hesitations during the reading encourage participation on the part of the child as the parent knows that the child knows the text. In other words, use of this questioning strategy provides a scaffold for the child to participate in the reading. The results also suggest that parents are aware (at least intuitively) that in order to become readers, children must develop a sense of story sequence within an overall framework and adopt suitable strategies in familiar texts for this to occur.

Juliebo (1985) noted in her study of the literacy experiences of four children at home and in Kindergarten that "Wendy's parents used different strategies when sharing a book with her. If it was a new story, understanding was the focus whereas with a well known favourite, participation was the main aim" (p.97).

Clay (1979), Doake (1981), Harkness and Miller (1982), and Holdaway (1979) among a host of other researchers have observed this phenomenon of completion reading within familiar texts. Hence it may be stated that the present study confirms statistically what has been noted through observation and ethnographic research.

Text Direction (6a) as a clarifying strategy focusses upon the graphic elements of the text. Many of the familiar texts read to the children in this study provided examples of print within the illustrations (signs, posters, labels, etc.) and key words written in body face or large type within the text. Using the child's knowledge of the text, i.e. the remembered meanings of the story, the parents employed a strategy within the familiar story which focussed the children's attention upon specific words within the context of the story. Having developed the appropriate meanings for the words to be focussed upon, the parent framed the child's attention to their surface form, thereby encouraging his/her understanding that the messages came from the print itself and that this print was preserved in an invariable way.

Doake (1985) notes that as parents read to children, "they point to print on occasions" (p.91). Pointing to the print and asking what a particular word says are two complementary functions. The former focusses upon the directionality of print, while the latter establishes a deeper understanding of the concept of "word." This writer was unable to locate any studies wherein parents requested knowledge of words in print. Harkness and Miller (1982) provide one example of where the mother asks her child about a particular letter on a page. "Where's the T. for T___? Is there a T for T___? On this page somewhere?" (p.28). In this instance the mother was presenting a new kind of information, attention to letters, and postponed her request in favour of the child's questions which related to the illustrations. Snow (1983) provides an example of a child and mother composing a word together, i.e. writing the letter which make up the child's name. Overall however, there is little evidence in the literature of the parent focussing the child's attention on the actual print during the joint book reading.

The strategy of Text Direction was found to be significant for familiar stories in the present study, indicating that parents mediate their children to the actual print of the text. Thus parents seem to be aware that in order to become readers, their children must attend to graphic cues. This point is consistent with the writings of Ehri (1985).

More instances of Confirmation (2b) were found in unfamiliar stories. It is suggested that the differences are due to the parents' needs to regulate their children's understanding of the text in the unfamiliar situation. Juliebo (1985) noted that when a new story was read carefully monitored understanding by the father was evident (p.97). In other words the parents want to know that their children know what is happening in the new story. They pose simple questions which can be responded to by a "yes" or "no" that do not require elaborative answers which might detract from the story itself. The questions provide for simple confirmation or negation of the youngster's understanding. Such a suggestion would appear to support Martinez's (1983) contention that for initial experiences with a text, the child responds little. Similar results were reported by Harkness and Miller (1982) where the mother in their study "noted the information she felt to be important by commenting on it or asking questions" in her initial readings (p.39), but was prone to withdrawing such support upon subsequent readings. Hence the monitoring of comprehension may be evaluated by the use of this strategy when the story is new to the child. It would be less necessary as a strategy at future readings when the child is more familiar with the story content.

It is also suggested that Confirmation as a clarification strategy may be an attention-keeping mechanism, a technique whereby the parent continually reinforces the child to keep listening even if the story does not particularly appeal to him/her. Just as Snow (1983) and Minio and Bruner (1978) have noted that the joint book reading situation has all the elements of a dialogue, use of this strategy where a child does not know the content of the story, would encourage him/her to participate, albeit at a minimum level.

B. Requests Form

As shown in Table 6, two of the strategies within the Request Form category were found to be significant--1) Convergent Simple where the speaker produces a question which demands a yes/no reply and 2) Text Command (a) where the speaker commands that a specific part of text be noted.

The direction of the significance by story type, as recorded in Table 7 is demonstrated by comparing the cell means for the two forms under discussion.

Discussion

The form of a clarifying strategy is connected in many instances to the functional aspect of that strategy. In other words it may be suggested that the function of the request controls the form by which the request may be linguistically presented.

Table 6

Significant Differences For Parents for Familiar and Unfamiliar Stories for Requests Form

Variable	df1 = 10	df2 = 67	F	p
Declarative (a)			0.019	0.888
Declarative (b)			3.766	0.056
Convergent Simple			9.359	0.003**
Convergent Choice			0.961	0.330
Convergent Leading			0.061	0.806
Signification			1.123	0.293
Open-Ended			1.123	0.293
Text Hesitation			0.011	0.917
Text Comand (a)			7.769	0.007**
Text Command (b)			0.357	0.552

*Probability of F = .05 ** = .01 *** = .001

Table 7

Parents' Familiar-Unfamiliar Requests Form Strategies

Cell means

Variable	Familiar	Unfamiliar
Convergent Simple Requests	.580	.883
Text Command (a) Requests	.173	.002

When viewed in conjunction with Requests Function, Convergent Simple as a lexical arrangement would appear to be a suitable medium for the function of Confirmation. Hence Convergent Simple as a linguistic form enables the adult to monitor the child's attention to and/or his/her comprehension of an unfamiliar story in an economical way. In general therefore it may be stated that for unfamiliar stories, parents choose the Convergent Simple form for their confirmation requests.

Text Command (a) as a linguistic form is a request couched in the form of a command. The command requests that the listener demonstrate his/her knowledge about a specific situation, event or object under discussion. In this particular strategy, the speaker wishes that a specific part of written text be noted.

It is suggested that this linguistic form is an example of the type of interaction defined by Feuerstein (1979) as mediation for competence, and the regulation of behaviour or accountability as noted by Snow (1983). The parent knows the child knows and therefore provides him/her with an opportunity to demonstrate that knowledge. It may also be suggested that the scaffolding technique (Ninio and Bruner, 1978) is functioning with the use of this form. The degrees of freedom for a choice among many words on the page is narrowed considerably and the use of Text Command as a form frames or filters out all other choices in order to direct the child to show his competency.

C. Response Function

Results for Response Function are shown in Table 8. Three of the strategies within the category were found to be significant--a) Confirmation wherein the response provides positive confirmation of the speaker's previous utterance, b) Non-Confirmation which provides a negative response to the question posed thereby providing an opportunity for the speaker(s) to interact further on the topic and c) Specification which is the strategy which defines, describes or identifies an object or occurrence.

Table 8

Significant Differences for Parents for Familiar and Unfamiliar Stories for Responses Function

Variable	dfl = 1 df2 = 76	F	p
1	Reinforcement	3.536	0.064
2	Confirmation	24.160	0.0001****
3	Non-Confirmation	3.941	0.050*
4	Specification	5.235	0.025*
5	Elaboration	1.096	0.298
6	Text Completion (a)	1.394	0.241
7	Text Completion (b)	1.394	0.241
8	Text Critique (a)	0.590	0.445
9	Text Critique (b)	0.420	0.519
10	Text Focus	0.279	0.599

*Probability of F = .05 ** = .01 *** = .001

In order to indicate the story type in which these three strategies tend to occur most often, Table 9 records the cells means for the familiar and unfamiliar stories for those three strategies.

Table 9

Parents' Familiar-Unfamiliar Response Function Strategies

Cell means		
Variables	Familiar	Unfamiliar
Confirmation	.584	.355
Non-Confirmation	.081	.140
Specification	.340	.587

Discussion

The response category for parents is inextricably bound to the request category of the children, particularly for the strategy of Confirmation where the youngster seeks affirmation that his/her ideas on the subject under discussion are correct and since the story is familiar, it is likely that they would be correct.

As a preferred strategy, parents confirmed information requested by their children more frequently in familiar as opposed to unfamiliar texts. As subsequent readings of a familiar story take place, the new insights and hypotheses generated by the text need to be confirmed. It is suggested that use of this strategy encourages the maintenance of mutual understanding of the story. The confirming responses of the parent demonstrate to the child that he/she is experiencing success with the risk taking behaviour in relation to the text.

Although Confirmation is also noted as a parent response for unfamiliar stories, it is less prevalent than in familiar stories indicating perhaps that children are less ready at this stage of their knowledge of the story to build deeper mutual understandings in an unfamiliar setting.

Confirmation as a strategy would appear to be a good example of semantic contingency as defined by Snow (1983), where the parent continues a topic (response) introduced by the child (request). Because the response is a simple yes, it provides immediate feedback to dissolve any confusion that may exist in the child's mind.

The strategy of Non-Confirmation as a response strategy was more frequently employed in unfamiliar stories by parents. When questioned, parents corrected their children's misconceptions concerning the text and thus were able to provide more information on the matter under discussion. As noted by Martinez (1983), the father in her study corrected his child only when there was an indication that the inaccurate information might interfere with her overall understanding of the text. In other words, use of this strategy regulates the child's behaviour (Feuerstein, 1983); it keeps the child on the right track in an unfamiliar situation so that with subsequent readings, feelings of competency with and control over the text as demonstrated by the strategy of Confirmation, noted above, may be accomplished.

Specification as a Response Function strategy was used by parents more frequently also in unfamiliar than familiar stories. It is proposed that these responses, by interpreting the meaning of the text, focus on selective or discriminitive aspects of the objects or events which need clarification, possibly made evident with Non-Confirmation. Hence Feuerstein's (1979) characteristic of interpretive meaning would appear to be exercised as the parents assist the child to build a conceptual framework for the story. Common sense indicates that children's curiosity about certain aspects of the story and their interest in learning what certain events or objects mean within the text, would be clarified in the specific responses of the parents particularly in unfamiliar stories.

HYPOTHESIS III

There will be no significant interaction effects between fathers/ mothers and familiar/unfamiliar stories in terms of the strategies employed.

This hypothesis was not rejected (see Table 10).

Table 10

Interaction Effects for Fathers/Mothers in Familiar/Unfamiliar Stories

Variable		df1	df2	F	p
Requests Function	0.8440	9	68	1.390	0.209
Requests Form	0.8919	10	67	0.812	0.618
Responses Function	0.9238	10	67	0.553	0.846
Responses Form	0.9477	6	71	0.652	0.688

Discussion

Snow and Goldfield (1982) stipulate that an "adult's potential utterances are greatly constrained by the content of the book" (p.553). As there is a lack of similarity in results between the present study and the studies carried out by Gleason (1975), McLaughlin et al. (1982) and Rondal (1981), it is suggested that fathers and mothers use similar strategies because book reading is a very specific situational context which may discourage idiocyncratic interactional strategies. "Even if the adult is not reading the text but is commenting on the pictures, the adult utterances will be predictable and recurrent" (Snow & Goldfield, 1982, p.554). In other words, the text constrains not only what one will talk about but also how one talks. It also seems that the familiarity or unfamiliarity of the text, also imposes strong constraints on the nature of the interaction. Thus, fathers and mothers in this study used similar interactional strategies within the constraints of the joint-book reading situations provided.

HYPOTHESIS IV

There will be no significant differences in the strategies employed by children when fathers read to them as opposed to when read to by mothers. Specifically there will be no differences for

a) requests function

b) requests form

c) responses function

d) responses form

This hypothesis was not rejected (see Table 11).

Table 11

Multivariate Analysis of Variance for

Differences in Strategies for Children

Variable		df1	df2	F	p
Requests Function	0.8149	9	68	1.418	0.198
Requests Form	0.8486	9	68	1.348	0.229
Responses Function	0.8809	10	67	0.906	0.533
Responses Form	0.9390	6	71	0.768	0.598

Probability of F = .05

Discussion

As noted earlier, fathers and mothers did not differ significantly in the strategies they employed with children. Hence it is not surprising, when one considers joint-book reading as an interactive procedure, that the children in this study did not differ significantly in their strategies when interacting with either father or mother. Children's verbal strategies in joint reading do not have an independent existence; rather they are interdependent with those of the mediating adult and the context and content of the situation, in this instance, the text. Just as parents' speech is modified for children learning language based on their cognitive and linguistic abilities (Teale, 1982), it would appear reasonable that differences for children were not found, as joint reading is an interpersonal endeavor based on mutual understanding of the context. This suggestion does not confirm Crago and Crago's (1983) contention that the "child's response to fiction was shaped by us, the adults who mediated between her and her books so much of the time and that a child surrounded by other mediating adults would necessarily have responded differently" (p.257).

HYPOTHESIS V

There will be no significant differences in the strategies employed by children when a familiar story as opposed to an unfamiliar story is being read to them. Specifically there will be no differences for

a) requests function
b) requests form
c) responses function
d) responses form

This hypothesis was rejected for Response Function and Response Form but not for Request Function and Request Form (see Table 12).

Significant differences for children's strategies for familiar/unfamiliar stories were noted in two categories--Responses Function and Responses Form. In order to determine which strategies within each category were significant, post hoc tests using Wilks Lambda approximate t-tests were performed.

Initially the variable of Responses Function will be interpreted and discussed. Subsequently the variable of Response Form will be addressed.

Table 12

Multivariate Analysis of Variance for Differences in Strategies for Children in Familiar/Unfamiliar Stories

Variable		df1	df2	F	p
Requests Function	0.8909	9	68	0.925	0.509
Requests Form	0.8993	9	68	0.846	0.577
Responses Function	0.5968	10	67	4.527	0.000****
Responses Form	0.7139	6	71	4.741	0.000****

Probability of F = .05 ** = .01 *** = .001

A. Response Function

Table 13 demonstrated that seven of the strategies within Responses Function were found to be significant. These included a) Reinforcement, b) Confirmation, c) Non-Confirmation, d) Text Completion (a), e) Text Completion (b), f) Text Critique (a), g) Text Focus.

In order to ascertain the direction of the significance by story type, Table 14 provides the cell means for the seven strategies.

Discussion

The strategies employed by children for familiar/unfamiliar stories produced larger means in unfamiliar stories in three instances--Reinforcement, Confirmation and Non-Confirmation. Familiar stories accounted for the significant direction for Text Completion (a) and (b), Text Critique and Text Focus.

Table 13

Significant Differences for Familiar and Unfamiliar Stories for Children for Responses Function

Variable dfl = 1 df2 = 76	F	p
Reinforcement	6.375	0.0137**
Confirmation	5.473	0.022*
Non-Confirmation	5.195	0.025*
Specification	1.966	0.165
Elaboration	1.360	0.247
Text Completion a)	19.381	0.00003****
Text Completion b)	4.545	0.036*
Text Critique a)	5.699	0.019*
Text Critique b)	0.196	0.659
Text Focus	3.822	0.054*

Probability of F = .05 ** = .01 *** = .001

As the new story is read, the child repeats on occasion all or part of the non-text utterances made by the adult. This repetition encourages the adult to continue talking about or reading the text. It is proposed therefore that for unfamiliar stories, use of the strategy of reinforcement is an example of intentionality on the part of children as defined by Feuerstein (1979) wherein the children show that they are attending to and focussing upon the interaction. Or as Harkness and Miller (1982) state "if he simply repeats what she has said, she will

Table 14

Children's Familiar/Unfamiliar Response

Function Strategies

Cell Means

Variable	Familiar	Unfamiliar
Reinforcement	0.061	0.150
Confirmation	0.524	0.645
Non-Confirmation	0.128	0.250
Text Completion (a)	0.104	0.005
Text Completion (b)	0.074	0.002
Text Critique	0.240	0.115
Text Focus	0.025	0.007

know that he has at least heard" (p.24). It should be noted that this strategy was significant at the .01 level, indicating its frequent use in the unfamiliar story. One may speculate that the child knows that it is important to provide feedback to the parent in the reading of the new text so that the reading will continue.

Confirmation as a strategy used by the children was also found to be significant in unfamiliar stories. Unlike Reinforcement mentioned above, Confirmation demonstrates that the child is on the same wavelength as the reader. The assignment of meaning (Feuerstein, 1979) presented by the parent is accepted by the child so that a common ground of understanding is built between the two. King (1985) contends that collaboration and negotiation of meaning provide the participants with "a common frame of reference" (p.23). On the basis of parents' behaviour noted from the tapes it seems reasonable to assume that in many cases the parents had not read the unfamiliar story prior to the joint-reading session and therefore both reader and listener established mutual agreement together as to its content.

Non-Confirmation as a more common strategy in unfamiliar stories seems to result from the question posed which provides a possible opportunity for the parent and child to interact further on the topic. The child demonstrates by his negative response that he needs help. The parent in turn interprets (scaffolds by specifying) for him in order to alleviate his cognitive confusion. Here again the "helpful adult" (Mason, 1980, p.221) assigns meaning (Feuerstein, 1979) to the event or object under discussion. In other words, the child shows that mediation is necessary, that he needs assistance, that he requires feedback from the adult in his search for understanding.

The strategies used most frequently with familiar stories for Responses Function were: a) Text Completion (a) and Text Completion (b), Text Critique and Text Focus.

For Text Completion (a) which is an exact reproduction of the text and Text Completion (b) which approximates the words of the text, it seems reasonable to find these strategies observed more frequently in familiar rather than unfamiliar stories. Completion reading as referred to by Doake (1985) was "the most frequently observed strategy being used by the children" (p.87) in the shared book experience. This study statistically confirms this finding. Holdaway (1979) and Doake (1981) contend that when meaning dominates the children's thoughts to retrieve stories, concern with reproducing the exact text is not paramount. Upon subsequent reading, closer and closer approximations are observed. However for the present study, it is interesting to note that the children were concerned with exact or approximate graphic correspondence in a meaningful situation. In employing these response strategies, children demonstrate their competence with familiar text and their correct interpretation of the author's meaning (Feuerstein, 1979).

Text Critique (a) involves commenting upon or an explanation of some difficulty with the text rather than the illustrations. As children become familiar with a story, their horizons are broadened within the context of that story to the extent that they can comment on the text and/or provide information which goes beyond the text. Martinez's (1983) study of a four-year-old girl and her father reading together appears to confirm the above suggestion. "In her initial experience with a book, Maria Dolores often had little to say while the story was being read. When she did make comments or ask questions, they were often of a literal nature. In subsequent readings, she became more verbal and her responses were often of a non-literal nature" (Martinez, 1983, p.206). Hence it may be suggested that a deeper understanding of the story surfaces upon repeated readings. Text Critique as a strategy demonstrates the attempts at deeper analysis.

The strategy of Text Focus encourages focussing or refocussing upon the story content. It may be assumed that as children know the familiar story, are aware of the character and the episodes which take place within the text, they are keen to get back on task, eager to carry on with the reading and therefore encourage their parents to do so. Although they take part in the verbal interactions with their parents concerning the story, the children indicate their desire to get back to the text by the use of this strategy, to have yet another opportunity to demonstrate their competency by their use of the strategies of Text Completion (a) and (b).

B. Response Form

As demonstrated in Table 15, six of the variables within Response Form were found to be significant--a) Repetition, b) Yes/No Response, c) Declarative Simple, d) Text Recognition (a) and e) Text Recognition (b).

Table 15

Significant Differences for Familiar and Unfamiliar Stories for Responses Form

Variable	df1 = 1	df2 = 76	F	p
Repetition			5.236	0.025*
Yes/No			9.794	0.002**
Declarative Simple			6.449	0.013**
Declarative Extended			0.511	0.477
Text Recognition (a)			10.012	0.002**
Text Recognition (b)			4.726	0.033*

Probability of F = .05 ** = .01 *** = .001

The direction of the significance for story type is provided in Table 16 which shows the cell means for the significant strategies.

Table 16

Children's Familiar/Unfamiliar

Response Form Strategies

Cell Means

Variable		Familiar	Unfamiliar
1	Repetition	0.069	0.150*
2	Yes/No	0.419	0.616**
3	Declarative Simple	0.487	0.254**
5	Text Recognition (a)	0.132	0.018**
6	Text Recognition (b)	0.052	0.005*

Discussion

Use of Repetition as the form of a response is an efficient method for the child to demonstrate that he/she is attending to the story being read. In addition it helps maintain the interaction in the new story where the child is not sufficiently aware of the story content to comment upon it. In other words, Repetition is a manifestation of the interpersonal activity inherent in joint-book reading (Teale, 1982) albeit at a minimal level of interaction between reader and listener. It may be speculated that the children not only reinforce the adult by their repetitions as previously suggested, but reinforce in their own minds the concept just discussed by repeating the phrase or sentence.

Hence they have another opportunity to hear this new idea and therefore solidify their understanding of what has been said.

Common sense would appear to indicate that the Yes/No form of response is highly used and that this form would be more prevalent in the unfamiliar as opposed to familiar stories. Reasons for such a suggestion may be based on the supposition that building mutual agreement as to the story's content or indicating that a lack of understanding about the topic is present, are succinctly demonstrated by a simple yes/no response form. Also, it has been shown that parents engaged extensively in a confirmation strategy in unfamiliar stories, often necessitating the yes/no response.

As a Response Form, Declarative Simple defines, describes or identifies an object or occurrence. Since the children already possess information about a familiar story, it appears that they utilize this particular form as a means to demonstrate their knowledge, to be specific in their responses. Specificity by its nature denotes competence and this very competence is made explicit to the parent by the child when he engages in using the Declarative Simple form. It is suggested therefore that use of this form demonstrates the kinds of meaning the child has constructed about the subject under discussion.

The occurrence of more Text Recognition or the use of textual words or their approximations in familiar stories may be explained by the fact that children are so familiar with the text that they can given an exact or close rendition of the story and are demonstrating their mastery over the experiences and the "sounds and rhythms of the rich and inviting language" (Doake, 1985, p.84).

HYPOTHESIS VI

There will be no significant interaction effects between children read to by fathers and children read to by mothers and familiar and unfamiliar stories in terms of the strategies employed.

This hypothesis was not rejected (see Table 17).

Table 17

Interaction Effects for Children

in Familiar/Unfamiliar Stories

Variable		df1	df2	F	p
Request Function	0.8558	9	68	1.273	0.268
Request Form	0.8827	0	68	1.004	0.446
Response Function	0.8670	10	67	1.027	0.431
Response Form	0.8931	6	71	1.416	0.221

Probability of F = .05

Discussion

Children read to by fathers and children read to by mothers were consistent in their use of strategies in familiar and unfamiliar stories. As previously mentioned, Snow and Goldfield (1983) contend that the kinds of behaviours which occur in joint book reading may be constrained by the text. Support for this contention appears to be suggested by the findings of the present study.

CONCLUSION

The research questions treated to statistical analysis confirm, in many instances what has been observed in studies using ethnographic research methods. Rather than the gender of the participants, it appears that the important feature which determines the kinds of strategies used is the story type. However it was suggested that parents used similar strategies regardless of the familiarity or unfamiliarity of text because the stories constrained not only what one might talk about but how the dialogue might occur.

Parental Requests Function were found to be significant for the strategies of Text Prediction and Text Direction (a). Confirmation as a request strategy was significant within the unfamiliar story. It was suggested that the latter strategy permitted parents to regulate their children's understanding of the text while the former encouraged children to demonstrate their competency with the text and to focus upon the graphic features of the print. The form of the parental requests demonstrates significant differences for Convergent Simple within unfamiliar stories, with Text Command (a) being significant for familiar texts. It was suggested that these linguistic forms regulate the child's understanding of the story, when new, and encourage the child to demonstrate his/her ability with the printed word when the text is familiar.

For parent Responses Function, Non-Confirmation and Specification for unfamiliar stories were found to be significant. The reverse trend was found for Confirmation. It was proposed that parents clarify their children's misconceptions and interpret the new story for their children while within the familiar text, parents by their use of Confirmation encourage risk-taking behaviour on the part of their children.

No significant differences were found for the strategies employed by children read to by fathers as opposed to children read to by mothers. As with their parents requests and responses, story familiarity determined the differences in strategies employed, and these differences were located only for Responses Function and Responses Form. Familiar stories accounted for the significant differences for Text Completion (a) and (b) Text Critique and Text Focus. Reinforcement, Confirmation and Non-Confirmation were found to be significant for unfamiliar stories. All significances were noted to be in the expected direction. Knowledge of the story permitted certain strategies to be demonstrated, that is to read the text with accuracy or with approximation, and to refocus upon the text because the child is anxious to show his competency. Within the unfamiliar story, his/her responses focus on attending to the story or indicating that he/she does or does not understand what the text entails.

For Responses Form, familiar texts accounted for the significance of Declarative Simple and Text Recognition (a) and (b). The more superficial involvement of the response forms of Repetition and Yes/No were significant for unfamiliar stories.

No interaction effects between fathers and mothers and unfamiliar and unfamiliar stories nor for children read to by father, children read to by mothers and story type were noted.

Overall the statistical analysis performed confirmed many findings reported in small case studies. Parents and children use a variety of request and response strategies within familiar and unfamiliar stories indicating that the dialogic nature of everyday contextualized language is mirrored in the language employed within joint-book reading events.

SUMMARY

This chapter presented each of the six hypotheses. Statistical analysis for each hypothesis was presented followed by discussion and conclusions.

Chapter VI presents the descriptive findings and results thereof together with a discussion of those results.

CHAPTER VI

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

This chapter contains the descriptive results of the study and is presented in the following manner. Each question is restated from Chapter IV. An explanation (procedure) is given as to how scores were tabulated. Discussion of the results follows as to the similarities and differences between the groups. Each section which explores a particular relationship concludes with a summary of the results. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Question 1

Is there a relationship between the children's level of literacy development and

a) strategies employed by the parents

b) strategies used by the children?

Procedure

In order to determine the relationship between the children's level of literacy as measured by the Concepts About Print Test (Brailsford, 1985) and the strategies employed by the parents and those used by the children, the proportionate scores of the most frequently used strategies for parents and children were tabulated within familiar and unfamiliar stories for both Requests and Responses. Frequency of the occurrence of a strategy was determined by selecting only those strategies which had been employed by at least 75% of the participants. The scores were recorded for Requests and Responses for High Print Aware (Brailsford, 1985) children and their parents and for Low Print Aware (Brailsford, 1985) children and their parents within familiar and unfamiliar stories. The means for the four groups (parents-HPA, parents-LPA, children-HPA and children LPA) were calculated. The analysis of the relationships involved comparing the means of the selected strategies within parent groups and within children groups.

Figures 5 and 6 present the results of the analyses. The y axis in these figures denotes the number of times out of one hundred utterances that the strategies were used.

Results

A. Parent Strategies

Figure 5 presents the most frequently used strategies for parents' requests and responses in familiar and unfamiliar stories. In general, parents of High Print Aware (HPA) and Low Print Aware (LPA) children used parallel strategies, and the frequencies of occurrence were quite similar. The requested information was confirmed and specified in both familiar and unfamiliar stories. However for requests within familiar stories, parents of LPA children focussed attention on the illustrations more often than did parents of HPA children. One may speculate that the parents of LPA children intuitively know that their children still need the support of the pictures to help them understand the familiar story

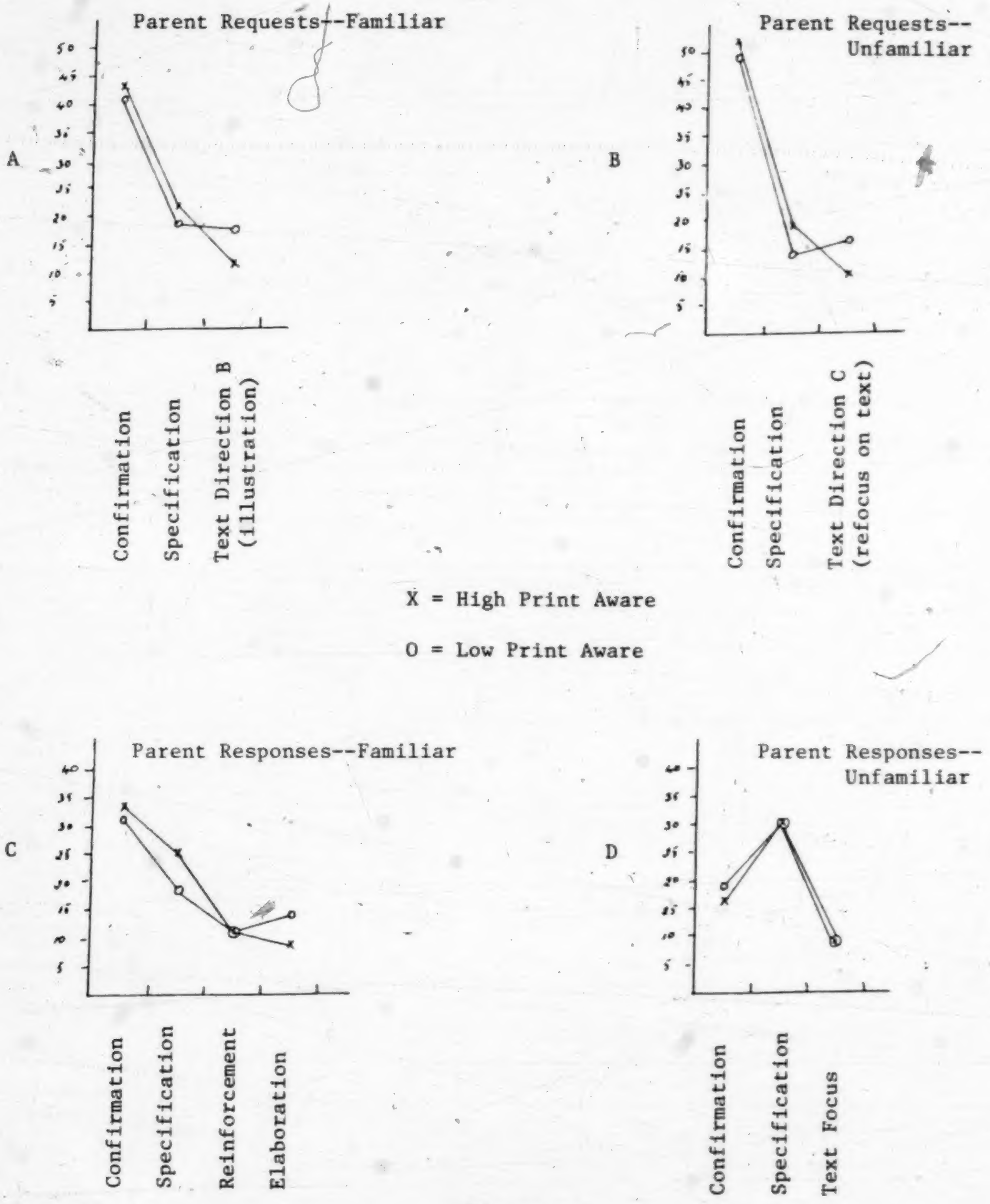


Figure 5

Parents' Preferred Strategies for Requests and Responses in Familiar and Unfamiliar Stories and therefore use the illustrations more frequently as a focus for their requests. Such a suggestion seems reasonable from the data of Figure 6c which demonstrates that the LPA children themselves commented upon the illustrations in the familiar story more often than did their HPA peers. In other words, the LPA children were still at the stage of reading development where dependency upon the illustrations was necessary for them in assisting them to derive meaning from the text, even when the content was familiar. Brailsford (1985) noted that Janice's mother, a HPA child, indicated that when initial contact with a story was made, she and the child "discussed the pictures and what's going on" (p.203) but subsequent readings focussed more on the words and the events of the story. It is possible however that children who are LPA continue to attend more frequently to the illustrations because they do not acquire competence as quickly as do the HPA children.

Within the unfamiliar text, as shown in Figure 5B the parents of LPA children also appeared to be more aware of the need to bring children and text together and redirected their children's attention to the story more often than did the parents of the HPA children. This may indicate that the parents of LPA children need to keep their children "on task" as it were; that is they need to help them to listen and to attend to the story. Heath (1982) noted that the parents in the Roadville community (a blue collar neighbourhood) expected their children to "listen and wait as an audience" (p.53) rather than breaking into the story with their own comments. It would appear that although the LPA students in this study did request information from their parents and responded to both familiar and unfamiliar texts, their parents requested that they continue to listen to the story more frequently than did the parents of the HPA children. However it is also possible that as the unfamiliar story was lengthy, the LPA children lost interest more quickly than they might have for another unfamiliar story and therefore were persuaded by their parents to attend. If this had not been part of a project, the reading of the story might have been abandoned.

Figures 5 C and D provide the results of parent responses in familiar and unfamiliar texts. That parents of both HPA and LPA children confirmed their children's requests was not surprising. One would expect parents to respond to their children in order that they may know that they are getting the correct messages from the stories being read.

That parents used the Confirmation strategy more frequently in familiar as opposed to unfamiliar stories is in line with the children's requests (Figure 6A). As the children monitored their understanding of the story, the parents informed them that they were correct in their assumptions. However, for both groups of parent responses within unfamliar texts, there are fewer instances of confirmation. It appears that rather than answering their children's requests by a simple "yes," the parents employed Specification as a response providing specific or discrete pieces of information.

Unfamiliar Text (The Three Spinners)

Lori (LPA): Is the princess crying?

Parent: She's got tears on her cheeks.

Unfamiliar Text (King Grisly Beard)

Tarla (HPA): Is she going to marry him?

Parent: Well, they're planning a wedding.

Although these responses provide the necessary information, they are couched in more subtle terms whereby the children have to infer that the response to their requests are affirmative. One may suggest that such responses indicate scaffolding (Ninio and Bruner, 1978) on the part of the parents, whereby they provide the necessary supportive stimulus for the child to make the correct assumption.

It is interesting to note that the parents of LPA children provided elaborative responses more often than did the parents of HPA children within familiar stories.

Familiar Text (The Bunny Sitter)

Jennifer (LPA): Dad, where did that fox get his feather?

Parent: Well, from one of the birds, I bet. I just bet you they were playing in the trees before they went to bed. Maybe he just snuck that one into his room.

Such responses would appear to foster growth in the children's understanding of the text whereby the parent assists the child in the strategies of making predictions and drawing conclusions and providing a deeper understanding of the author's intent (Martinez and Roser, 1985).

B Children Strategies

The data in Figure 6A and B indicate that the most frequently used strategies were similar for HPA and LPA children in familiar and

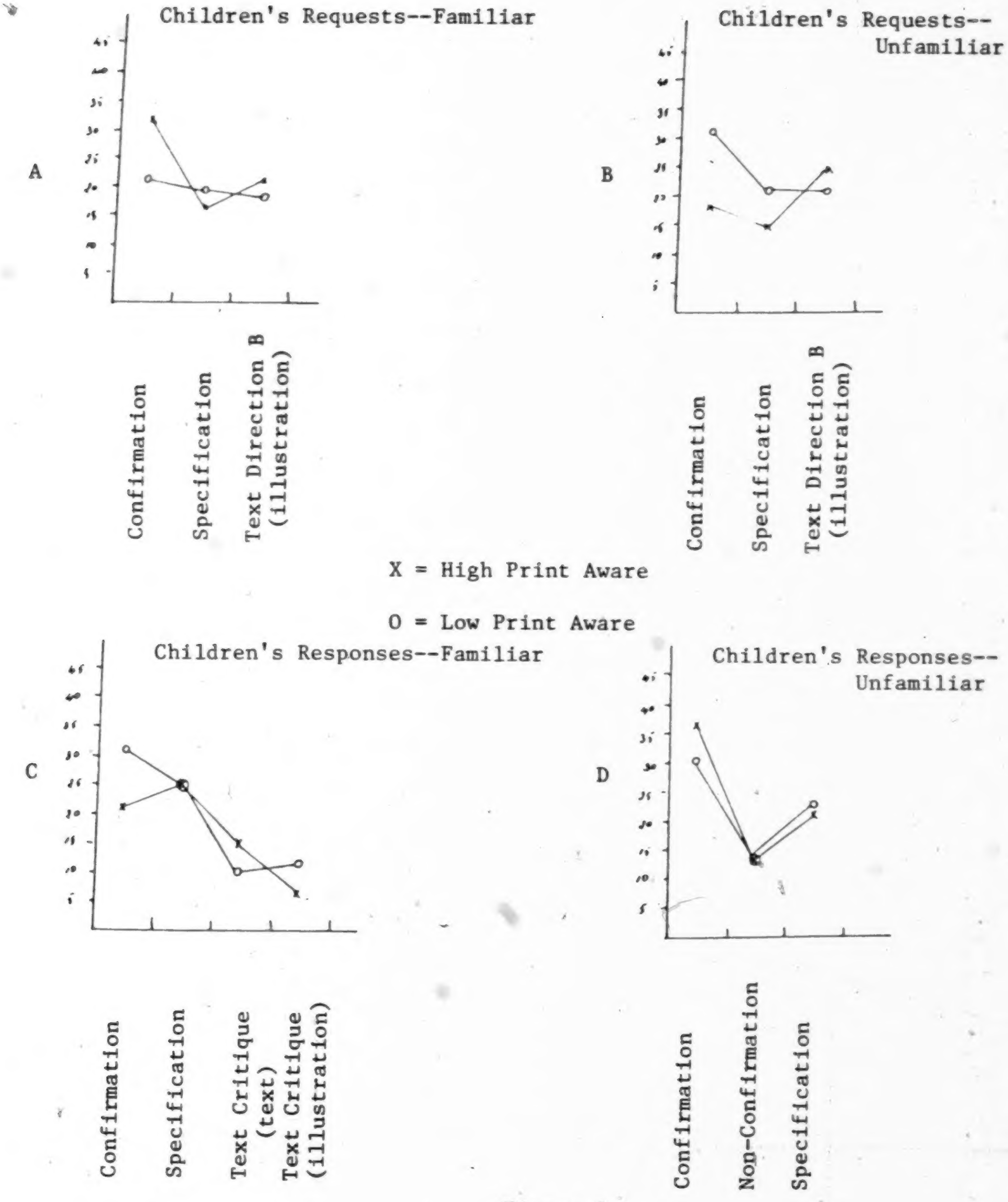


Figure 6

Children's Preferred Strategies for Requests and Responses in Familiar and Unfamiliar Stories unfamiliar stories. However the extent to which two of these strategies (Specification and Text Direction--Illustration) were used was also similar. Martinez and Roser (1985) in their recent study of story-time interactions at home and at school reported that when a story was familiar, children tended to make more comments about the story and asked fewer questions than when the story was unfamiliar. The present research would not appear to confirm these findings. However Martinez and Roser (1985) also suggest that as the children become more familiar with a text "they had different concerns about the stories" (p.785). In other words they attend to "different discussions" (p.785) of the story. It is suggested therefore that as HPA children (who are more familiar with print) look for deeper meanings by employing why rather than what questions, particularly within the familiar text, the focus of their attention is to deeper understandings rather than the surface features of the story.

Familiar Text (Bambi)

Treena (HPA): Why's it destroying it?

Parent: Because the fire started. It came from their campfire.

Treena: Why did the campfire do it?

Parent: A spark went out and it started to burn the grass beside it and so it started burning.

Treena: Yeah.

Familiar Text (Where the Wild Things Are)

Parent: There's a good creature. See?

Jericho (LPA): What is it?

Parent: I don't know what they call that. A sea monster or something.

As can be seen from the two transcriptions above, one may assume that Treena's questions focus on story details rather than story character. She is delving more deeply into the reasons for the episodes contained within the story. When the parent's initial response does not sufficiently clarify her understanding of the event, she poses another question whereupon further details are provided for her, offering her a deeper analysis of what has happened and the causality of the event. Jericho, on the other hand, only wants to know the label for the creature seen in the text, a much more superficial understanding. Interesting also, is the parent response, which at best is vague and does not appear to be conducive to further interaction and concept development.

Further support for the contention that HPA children appear to delve more deeply into the story's content comes from the use of the Request strategy of Confirmation. Within the familiar story, the HPA children's frequency score was much higher than that of their LPA peers. The reverse was found for the unfamiliar text. The HPA children sought confirmation that their deeper understanding of the text was "on line" as it were, in keeping with the author's intent. The LPA children, on the other hand, still appeared to be attending to surface details.

Familiar Text (It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown)

Sheri (HPA): Are there balls hearts too?

Parent: Yeah! Well, little tiny hearts.

Sheri: They're in love?

Parent: Oh, yeah! She really had a crush on Linus.

Sheri: How come?

Parent: Oh, she thinks he's neat.

Familiar text (The Clown Around Us)

Vanessa (LPA): Is the baby sleeping?

Parent: Yeah, see there? Sleeping in his banana bed. Would you like a banana bed?

Vanessa: Yeah, yeah! Like that.

The question "Are they in love?" zeros in on the deeper relationship between Linus and Sally in the story; they just do not love each other, but are in love. Sheri attempts to understand this concept as she moves towards inferring author-implicit meanings. Vanessa, however, only attempts to confirm what had been stated earlier in the text, focussing on the literal interpretation of the story.

Within the unfamiliar story, however, the HPA children asked fewer questions, preferring instead, it is assumed, to wait for an overall picture of what was happening within the story. When questions were posed by them, they focussed on simple details of the settings and characters within the story. It is interesting to note that their LPA peers asked considerably more questions of the Confirmation kind in unfamiliar stories, questions very similar to those asked in the familiar setting, i.e. surface level questions. It is suggested therefore that HPA children had built up a well developed story schema which encouraged them to look beyond the surface details of the text and enquire more deeply into the author's intent.

Within the unfamiliar text, however, both HPA and LPA children's Request strategies for Confirmation centered on the literal aspects of the stories.

Unfamiliar Text (King Grisly Beard)

Sheri (HPA): Is she mean to everyone?

Parent: Yeah! She's mean to them all.

Unfamiliar Text (The Three Spinners)

Vanessa (LPA): Is the mother mad at her?

Parent: Yeah. They wouldn't do any work, you see.

Here it is evident that Sheri and Vanessa were seeking literal interpretations of the unfamiliar texts, attempting to understand the characters and their roles within the stories.

Data supporting the contention that both HPA and LPA children used the illustrations with the story as a support to getting meaning is also shown in Figure 6A and B. Both groups of children generated questions more frequently in the unfamiliar setting confirming Martinez and Roser's (1985) finding that children "tended to ask more questions when a story was unfamiliar" (p.784).

The children's responses for both text situations are presented in Figure 6C and D. For the unfamiliar story, there is generally little difference in the pattern of responses for HPA and LPA children although the former appear to use a Confirmation strategy more frequently than their LPA peers. As parents used Confirmation in their requests for unfamiliar texts very frequently (see Figure 5B), it is not surprising that the children responded using the same strategy. In other words, the children let their parents know that they were attending to and understanding what was happening in the story. However there were instances where the children, regardless of their print knowledge, did not understand as noted by the strategy of Non-Confirmation. It is suggested therefore that in such instances, when the children did not know the response to a question, parents described or identified what was occurring using the Specification response strategy (see Figure 5D).

Unfamiliar Text (The Three Spinners)

Parent: Know what a carriage is?

Russell (LPA): No.

Parent: It's like a covered wagon.

Unfamiliar Text (King Grisly Beard)

Parent: Do you know what's going to happen?

Jill (HPA): No.

Parent: She's going to have to stay with the beggar.

Such responses would account for the higher frequency scores of Specification for parent responses (see Figure 5D) although as previously mentioned parents of LPA children used this strategy as a response to their children's Confirmation requests on occasions.

Within the familiar text children used Confirmation and Specification as preferred response strategies, although LPA children used Confirmation more frequently than their HPA peers. The frequency discrepancies between the parents' Confirmation request strategies (see Figure 5A) and the children's Confirmation responses (Figure 6C) is somewhat accounted for by the fact that frequently the children responded to a Confirmation question by describing or defining the object or event under discussion.

Familiar Text (Jack and the Beanstalk)

Parent: He's mean, isn't he?

Patrick (LPA): He's a great big mean giant and bad.

Parent: Right! He's big and he's mean and he wants to catch Jack. Real bad guy.

Patrick: Yeah!

Familiar Text (Scuffy the Tug Boat)

Parent: Do you know what polka dots are?

Johnathon (HPA): They're little circles on things, round things like—like circles in the middle.

Parent: Yeah! Little dots all over.

Here the children specified rather than confirmed the parents' requests, demonstrating that they had grasped the concepts of "mean" and "polka dots;" they demonstrated their competency by describing and defining their level of understanding.

It is interesting to note that the Text Critique (a) strategy which involves commentary upon or explaining the text was used by the children in their responses but was not evident as a frequently used strategy by the parents. That both HPA and LPA children did at times remark upon what was being read indicated that they were attempting to synthesize the information or focus upon particular words within the text. One would assume that familiarity with the story would permit such behaviour to occur. As the children knew what was going to happen, they could predict the future parts of the text as it were and bring that information to bear upon the presently read section.

Familiar Text (Winnie the Pooh and Tigger)

Treena (HPA): That would be a good idea.

Parent: What idea?

Treena: To do that.

Parent: Do what?

Treena: Bounce on the coat.

Parent: Oh, jump up and down into the middle of the coat?

Treena: Yeah.

Parent: So people hold the edges?

Treena: Yeah.

Parent: Oh.

Treena: That's safe.

Parent: That's safer, yeah. I like that idea.

Perhaps the most interesting point of the children's requests, regardless of the familiarity of the story or the degree of print awareness, is that they are an indication that frequently the children were initiators within the joint book situation. In addition, the kinds of strategies they employed were similar (with one exception--Text Direction C) to those used by their parents. Hence one may ask if the parents' questioning strategies influence the children's approach to questionning. Conversely are parental request strategies influenced by those employed by their children?

Summary

The relationship between levels of literacy development and the strategies employed by either parents or children in a joint book experience would appear to be undetermined within this study. Generally parents differed little in the nature and quantity of their request strategies, regardless of whether the story was familiar or unfamiliar or whether their children had much or little literacy knowledge. Confirmation was the most preferred strategy with Specification also occurring frequently. It was also noted that parents of LPA children had to keep their children on task more frequently than parents of HPA children as demonstrated by their use of a Text Focus strategy.

The frequency of children's requests on the other hand did differ. Although both HPA and LPA children used similar strategies in both familiar and unfamiliar texts, HPA children used Confirmation more frequently in familiar stories than did LPA children. The reverse trend was found for unfamiliar stories. Since the way in which the Confirmation request strategy was used differed, it was speculated that HPA children employ this strategy in familiar stories to build up a deeper understanding of what is entailed in the text, while LPA children were more prone to focus on the surface level of the stories, the literal meanings.

While parents of H and LPA children also differed little in the nature of their responses for unfamiliar stories, some differences did occur for the familiar stories. Within the familiar text, Confirmation was the preferred response strategy of both groups of parents, with

Specification being the second most frequent choice. However for this latter strategy, the parents of HPA children were found to use it more frequently than the parents of LPA children. In addition, Elaboration as a response strategy was more frequently employed by the parents of LPA children than the parents of HPA children.

For the children's response strategies, few differences were noted for the nature or quantity of strategies for H and LPA children in unfamiliar texts. However for familiar stories, although Confirmation was the preferred response strategy for both groups, LPA children were more frequent in their use of this strategy than their HPA peers. The response strategy of Specification was also frequently employed by H and LPA children. In addition, Text Critique (a), a response strategy which involved commenting upon or explaining the text, was noted, with HPA children using it slightly more often. However it may be seen as evidenced by the frequency scores of requests and responses for parents and children that the joint book reading is an interactional activity regardless of the level of the children's print awareness. Rather than parents simply reading to the children, it appears they read with them as the children frequently were the initiators of the dialogue emerging from the story. This finding confirms Doake's (1981) contention that parents encourage and support verbal interactions. In conclusion it appears that parents of LPA and HPA children generally used similar strategies within this interaction and frequency differences within those strategies were not considerable. As for the children on the other hand, LPA and HPA children appear to use similar strategies but the frequencies of occurrence were not similar. Therefore one may infer that rather than the kind of strategy used being a differentiating factor it is the frequency with which it is used which may be related to the child's literacy level.

Question 2

Is there a relationship between the children's level of literacy development and the contextualization of the stories to the children's world knowledge?

Procedure

Each transcript was examined in order to locate instances of events or objects within the stories which either parents or children related to specific experiences which the children had encountered during their lives. Such instances of contextualization differed from simple explanations. For example the explanation "clogs are a kind of shoe" would not be recorded as contextualization within the present framework. Rather "clogs are like those wooden shoes we saw in the museum" relates the concept of clogs to a broader world knowledge, to a particular background experience that the child has had.

Each example of contextualization was coded nominally; several utterances may have been included in a single example. The average number of instances per story were tabulated separately for parents of HPA and LPA children and for LPA and HPA children.

Results

Figures 7 and 8 demonstrate the average number of examples of contextualizing print within the story readings. As may be seen, parents of HPA children and HPA children themselves transformed the decontextualized written print into outwardly explicit information related to the children's world knowledge by relating the textual information to real life situations more often than parents of LPA children or LPA children.

Unfamiliar Text (The Three Spinners)

The mother read to that point in the text where the spinning of flax into yarn was the task required of the young girl in the story. The reading ceased and the mother checked her daughter's understanding of the plot so far.

M.: What's flax?

Melanie (HPA): I don't know.

M.: It's a type of--um--grain, a plant that grows and you use it to make linen, a material like in--you know our best tablecloth? The red one we use at Christmas? That's made of linen.

Melanie: Oh.

M.: You use flax to spin. Do you know what I mean by spin?

Melanie: Turn?

M.: Yes. The wheel turns. Remember Auntie Bertha had an old spinning wheel? Remember that? And I told you when you were older you could have one for your very own?

Melanie: Yeah.

M.: Well, on that wheel you can put the thread on it and spin it. Well, a sheep has wool but the wool is all in kinds of balls and you pull the balls of wool for threads with

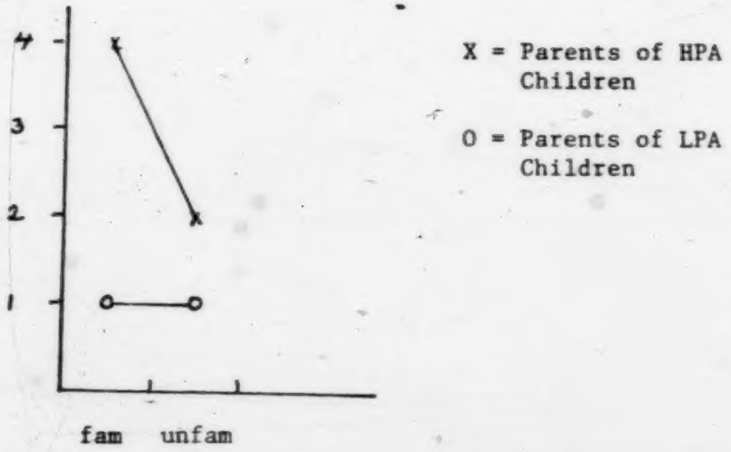


Figure 7

Contextualization by Parents

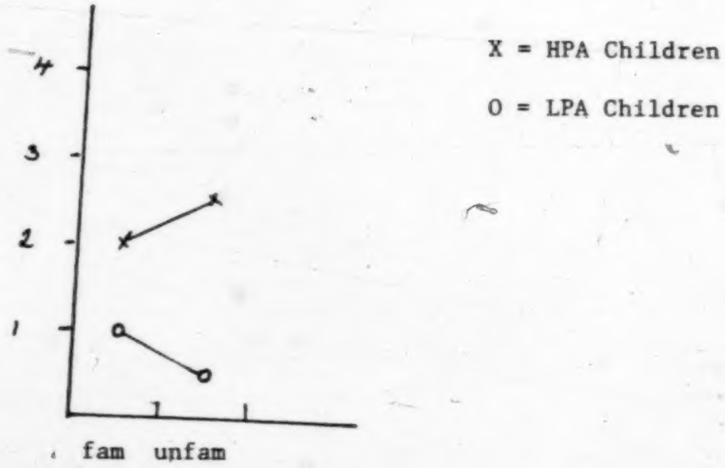


Figure 8

Contextualization by Children

the spinning wheel and make the wool very thin and then make a sweater from it, like the one Nana knit for you. So when you spin the wool it's like when you spin the flax so that you can make--use it and crochet and build things with it. See?

Melanie: Can I spin when I get one like Auntie Bertha's?

M.: Sure you can. Okay? Let's read more now.

This example demonstrates how one child was mediated to the text by the parent by relating the child's own life to the textual information. The red tablecloth used at Christmas, Auntie Bertha's spinning wheel and the sweater knit by grandmother are all examples which assisted the child in bringing her own world knowledge to the concept of spinning. She was provided with a bridge to interpret the text in the light of her own background experience. The parent reached into the life of the child to find concrete instances which related to the decontextualized concepts presented in the text. In other words, the parent above not only demonstrated that one may gain knowledge from the print, but one's understanding of it lies within one's own experience; that is, Melanie was moved towards interpreting ideas in the print with the assistance of specific examples from her own life. This kind of interaction was made possible because of the significance which had been attached to the concepts of tablecloth, spinning wheel and sweater in terms of the parent's and child's prior experiences. Thus transcendence also needs to be considered with the signification of concepts from the participant's culture.

Another example, initiated by the child in this instance, shows how she attempts to derive meaning from the author's message by bringing her world experience to bear on the topic. The parent and child have just discussed various objects which can fly, such as birds and airplanes. The conversation continues:

Familiar Text (Winnie the Pooh and Tigger)

Father: Tiggers don't--have you ever seen a Tigger fly?

Treena (HPA): No.

F.: Never. Tiggers don't fly.

Treena: Never.

F.: He only thinks he can fly.

Treena: Yeah.

F.: They can't fly.

Treena: Just some--some tigers can fly.

F.: They haven't got wings. How could they fly? Look! Birds have wings.

Treena: Well--they--they could put feathers on--in their hands. Then they could fly.

F.: They put feathers--feathers in their hands? To fly?

Treena: Yes.

F.: No!

Treena: Yes, Dad. On T.V. they did it. I saw that.

F.: I don't believe that.

Treena: Yeah, Dad. They did. Honest. If you have a costume on then you could.

F.: A costume?

Treena: Yeah. Feathers on this part here and they flyed easy. I saw it, really on T.V.

F.: Flew, did they? Okay, if you saw it.

In this dialogue, although parent and child had reached a consensus that Tiggers do not fly, the child reached back into her experience and moved the conversation to the "real" tigers which she saw on television. The fact that her father was not inclined to believe her did not distract or deter her from relating what she saw and knew. She specified that a feathered costume was sufficient for the act of flying, the word feathers not having been mentioned previously in the text or the conversation. It is suggested that this child's concept of flying is broader, although inaccurate, as a result of her television experience which she brings to bear on her interpretation of Tigger flying down from the tree. It is interesting to note that the father did not correct her understanding of the concept of flying. Did he feel that an explanation would have been too complicated for his daughter? Perhaps he was of the opinion that if the child saw "flying tigers" on television, her perceptions of reality and fantasy were still intertwined and that time would assist her in differentiating between the two.

As noted in Chapter 3, story reading may be the child's major experience, during preschool years, with decontextualized print. Snow (1983) contends that the historical context, that is "the children's previous experience with some event, place, word or text which can support their current interpretation or reaction" (p.175) may provide a contextual framework which assists the child increase his knowledge of the existence of decontextualized text. In other words he is able to share common knowledge with the author because he has experienced common events. He can move away from the present (the story itself which is being read) to the past, (to an experience he has had with an object, place, event or word in the text).

Similar views of the contextualizing of stories to the child's world knowledge would appear to be involved in Feuerstein and Hoffman's (1980) notion of transcendence. Moving from the immediate here and now situation to "others that are remote in time and space" (p.56) encourages the child to respond to the new experiences held within the text in the light of these which occurred previously in his own life. Hence within the story reading episodes, the reader and listener may take advantage of situations that occur which "produce a constant expansion of the individual's spatial and temporal life space" (p.56).

Heath (1983) noted in her ethnography of the Roadville community that "children were not encouraged to move their understanding of books into other situational contexts or to apply it in their general knowledge of the world around them" (p.61). Cochran-Smith (1984) in her analysis of story book events in a community reported that in the community library setting, little attempt was made to relate the children's experiences to the books being read. However in the nursery school within the same community, "mutual negotiation of the sense of texts" (p.259) was highly encouraged.

As Figures 7 and 8 demonstrate, HPA children and their parents, in this study, provided instances of contextualizing the story's content more frequently than LPA children and their parents. That is the HPA children moved and were moved towards understanding decontextualized information by relating their world knowledge to the author's meaning and were encouraged to use their own experiences as frameworks for comprehending the text. Brailsford (1985) noted that HPA parents "related story content and literacy activities to other facets of the children's lives" (p.562).

If one agrees with Snow (1983) and Feuerstein and Hoffman (1980) that decreasing reliance on the present environment permits readers (listeners) to "actively and continuously participate in the creation of meanings by bringing their own life and literary experiences to bear on the texts" (Cochran-Smith, 1984, p.176) by moving towards the historic or the there and then of past experiences, it appears that HPA parents and their children demonstrate this behaviour more often than their LPA peers.

Summary

Overall it was found that parents of HPA children and HPA children themselves brought specific background knowledge to bear upon texts more frequently than did LPA children and their parents.

Question 3

a) Is there a relationship between the environmental factors in the home as indicated by the parent interviews and the children's level of literacy?

Procedure

Twenty parents (ten fathers and ten mothers) were interviewed, one corresponding to each participating child. The interviews were open-ended although the Family Reading Questionnaire (see Appendix B) provided certain leading questions. All responses were nominally classified. The responses were neither arranged hierarchically or otherwise assigned any value. The semantic content of the responses provided the basis on which they were evaluated as relevant to the research questions. Frequencies of responses to the questions were calculated for parents of High Print Aware and Low Print Aware children. Percentages for the two groups were then tabulated.

Results

A. Children's Books In The Home

Figure 9 presents the results of the availability of books in the home. The quantity of books available in the home varied considerably from family to family, from 20 to over 250. These books did not include library books. In addition the quantity often depended on the child's placement in the family. Youngest children generally tended to have a larger number of books, most of which were inherited from older siblings.

It should be noted that when parents answered this question, the figures they gave were approximate. No counting of the books took place. All however were of the opinon, regardless of the number of books available that their children "had lots of books" in the home, which could be read to them. Brailsford (1985) noted similar comments. As one father whose child had about 25 books said "there seems to be

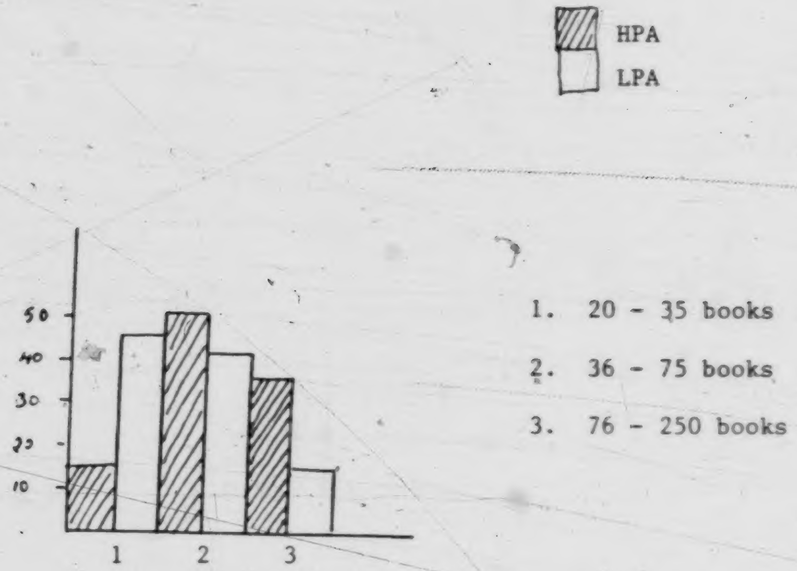


Figure 9

Books Available in the Home

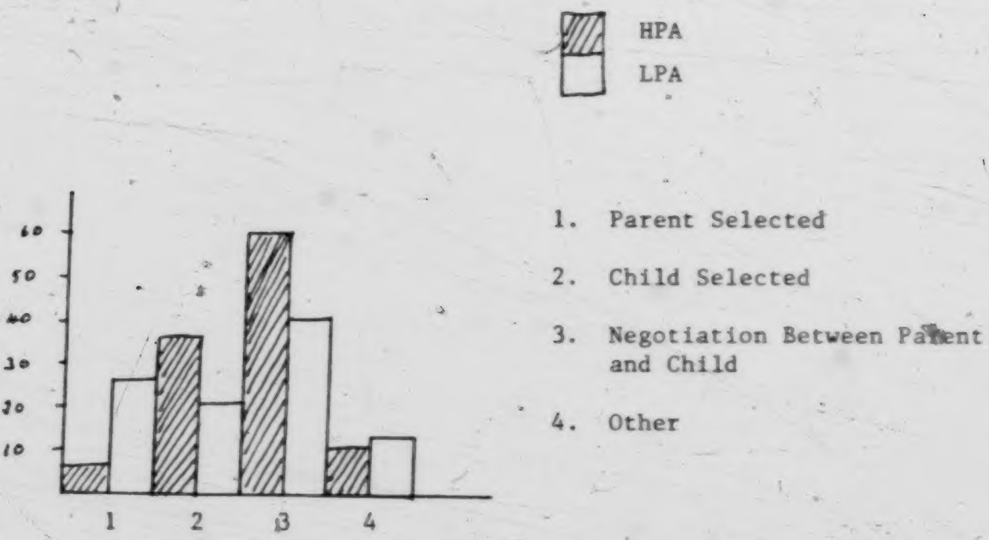


Figure 10

How Books Selected

books, her books, all over the house. She's supposed to keep them in her room but they're everywhere."

In general there were some differences in the number of books available to HPA as opposed to LPA children. Only 15% HPA children as opposed to 43% LPA children had less than 35 books in their own libraries. On the other hand 35% of HPA children had more than 76 books as opposed to 15% for LPA children. In other words, HPA children were likely to have more books in the home than their LPA peers confirming King and Friesen's (1972) findings for early readers. It may suggest therefore that these HPA children, in particular, had continual and ample access to decontextualized print. Within the collections there would be found a variety of different kinds of texts providing the children with a strong basis for vocabulary development and for the development of story schema (Snow and Goldfield, 1983).

The results of how books were selected are presented in Figure 10. Generally parents and children negotiated as to the choice of books. Reasons for the negotiations varied. "That's too long for tonight" or "I think we should try this one for a change." If it was a new book from the library, the parents noted they often prefaced the reading with remarks such as "This looks interesting. Let's try it tonight." In addition, often two books were chosen for the evening's activity, one the choice of the child, the other of the parent. "She'll pick one and I'll pick one. Everyone's happy that way," recounted one mother. This reciprocal arrangement might, it is proposed, build up the understanding for the children that parents also have a vested interest in the activity. Their role is not seen therefore, just as reader; the implicit understanding may be that they are viewed as experience extenders by encouraging children to listen to their choices of texts. In other words the negotiation infers that the parents may recognize the responsibility the child has for his own learning while not removing their own responsibility to broaden the literacy world of their children.

It should be noted that LPA children were given fewer opportunities than HPA children to select the reading. Similar findings were noted by Doake (1981). Rather the parent chose what book would be read. One parent commented "when she was smaller she picked out the book she wanted, but now, we (the parents) usually do. She was always picking the same ones and some she never wanted to listen to. So we think she should hear lots of stories. Less boring for us, too." One may assume from the above comment that this parent felt that although reading stories was something that should be done (Brailsford, 1985) repetition of stories was to be avoided because the child was less likely to learn anything new and because the parent found the task wearisome. It may also be suggested that as the youngsters were now approaching formal schooling, parents were unconsciously training their children towards acceptable school behaviour, i.e. receivers rather than initiators of the reading event. As Heath (1983) noted, parents in the Roadville community in her study exhibited similar expectations.

Thirty-five percent of HPA children and 20% of LPA children usually selected the stories to be read. One father commented "If I pick one, she fidgets around, she knows the story but she fidgets, so I let her pick it." One may question how new stories are introduced to the child if he/she is always the one to choose the selection. Perhaps these youngsters are eclectic in their choice of books or perhaps as Brailsford (1985) noted, some children choose books based on their current interests rather than choosing long time favourites, which would allow for a wider variety of texts.

Overall there were few differences noted for the kinds of favourite books of HPA or LPA children (see Figure 11). Both groups preferred fairy tales such as Cinderella, Three Billy Goats Gruff, etc. with animal stories where various creatures talked also being frequently chosen; adventures rated as third choice. Such findings do not confirm Brailsford's (1985) observations of parents of LPA children who could not "recall any favourite books their children had selected" (p.555). One father noted "He loves animal stories with me changing my voice for all the parts. Sometimes I get mixed up and he reminds me." It is interesting that children's preferences allow for interaction, encourage dialogue between reader and listener. One would assume that informational books for such young readers would lean towards simple labelling rather than participatory discussion. In addition it is suggested that these books are more difficult to remember and therefore memorize as they lack story structure. The preferred books, on the other hand, are alive with the emotions and motives of human endeavours more in tune with the children's own experience, providing credibility for their own inner storying (Spencer, 1976).

Figure 12 demonstrates how new books were added to the child's collection. Generally few differences were noted as to the sources for

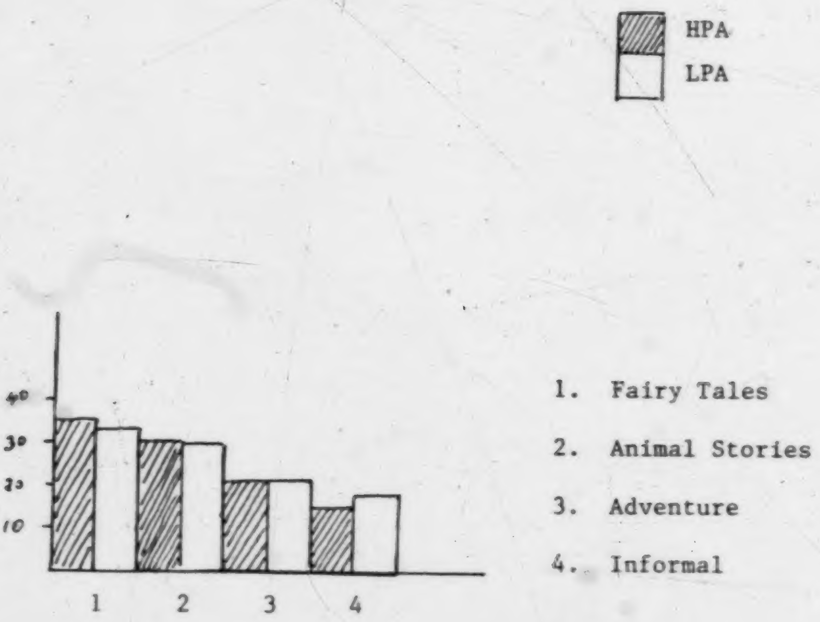


Figure 11

Favourite Kinds of Books

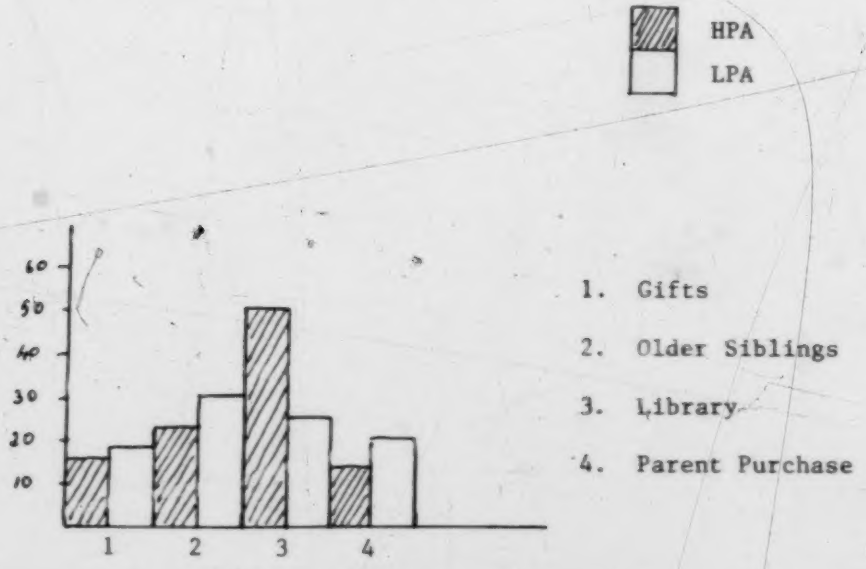


Figure 12

Sources of New Materials

new materials with the exception of the library use. Although most parents reported that new books were bought primarily for special occasions--birthdays, Christmas, etc. by themselves or friends and relatives, books were purchased by the parents at a local grocery store when an child showed a particular interest. One father reported "when he really seems keen, I buy it for him, 'cause they never cost more than dollar or so." One may speculate that the kinds of books sold in such locations would be of lesser literary quality than those available at the public library.

In addition for both HPA and LPA children there was a regular supply of new books coming into the house as a result of their older siblings bringing story books home from school. One mother noted "Jennifer loves Fridays. That's when Shawn brings home his school library book. We read it together then."

The most salient difference between the HPA and LPA children was in their use of the library. Fifty percent of the former used the library as a source of new materials as opposed to 25% of LPA children. The data regarding LPA children do not confirm the findings of Brailsford (1985) who noted that LPA children had "few sources for obtaining new materials" (p.197).

The results of how frequently the Public Library was used are presented in Figure 13. The HPA children had greater access to the library than did their LPA peers.

Although the district where the study took place has an excellent modern children's library, thirty percent of the subjects rarely took

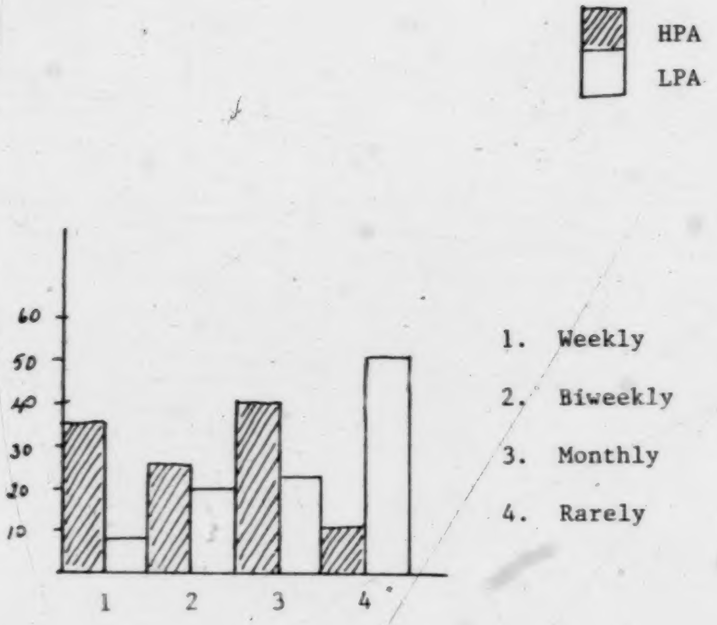


Figure 13

Use of Public Library

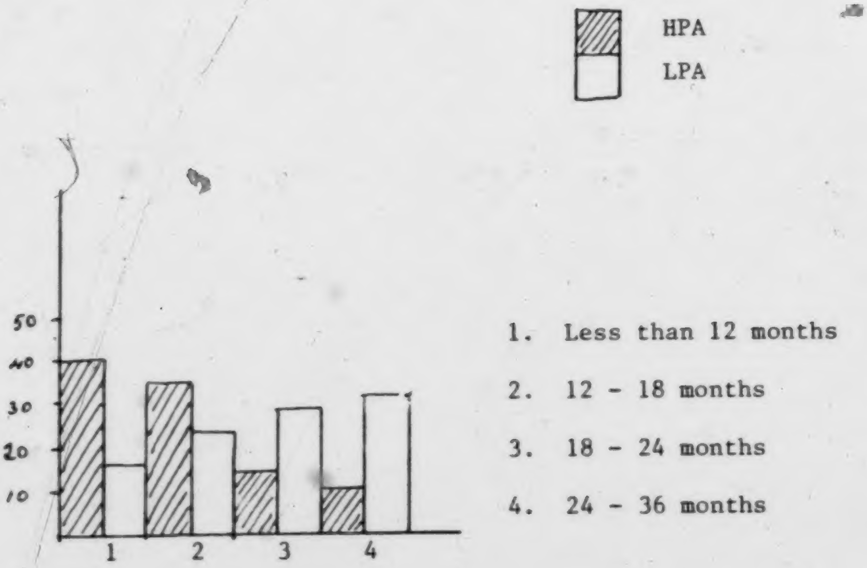


Figure 14

Age When Reading-to Began

their children to this facility; in fact 50% of the LPA children had only been there a few times. In addition, only nine of the children, seven of then HPA children, had taken advantage of the story-hour sessions provided by the librarians. The main reasons for not taking the children were that they were too young, they had plenty of books at home or that it was too far. The latter reason is somewhat suspect as the library is in the heart of the commercial facilities being used for shopping, banking, etc. However it should be noted that all parents were aware of the library and all of the children had been there at some time in the six months prior to gathering data for the study.

Mothers were the main companions for the children on their visits which is understandable as evening attendance would be inconvenient for such young children, and most mothers did not work outside the home. It is interesting to note that fathers generally frequented the library more often than their spouses.

Many parents noted that on their own personal visits they selected books for their children, often as many as eight or ten at a time. There are no limits as to the quantity of books which may be borrowed from the children's section, nor are fines levied for late returns at this particular library. One father commented "I know what she likes, so I get some (books) for her when I go." When children did accompany their parents, the selection of books again was decided by the parents although at times negotiation of which books to borrow took place. "She'll bring me a book. I'll tell her if its O.K. or we'll talk about it before we take it out," said one mother. All of the frequent users (50% of the HPA children) knew where "their section" was located. One father recounted "she knows where her books are on the shelves." In other words, the easy sections were familiar to them, the picture books located on the "train" and the soft cover texts on the revolving shelves.

The majority of parents, regardless of their children's literacy development, reported that it was a rare occasion to borrow a book which the child had previously read, although a different version of a known story (e.g. Cinderella) might be borrowed. However as one father noted "she prefers the one at home though." One may suggest that the familiarity of the "home" text was more suited to the child's needs. One may also suspect some disappointment on the youngster's part when she found the library book "Cinderella" to be different from her expectations, that what she thought was unchanging was in fact changed. Generally however, unfamiliar texts were the ones borrowed. The parents' rationale appeared to be that providing new stories was important and that the library was an excellent facility for this purpose.

B. Childrens' Reading Background

As demonstrated in Figure 14, HPA children were read to at an earlier age than LPA children. In other words, the majority of the former children were involved in joint book interactions on a continual basis prior to attaining the age of 18 months. These figures confirm Doake's (1981) findings where two of the children in his study (Gillian and Jennifer) were exposed to books on an ongoing basis prior to being one year old. Juliebo (1985) notes that all five of her subjects were read to "at an early age" (p.175) although no specific ages were given. One may suggest that if the reading activity starts prior to the age of 12 months as opposed to 24+ months, the children would have a greater exposure to books generally and the language contained within them in particular during that crucial time where there is an explosion in oral language development. In other words, their high expectations of print (Holdaway, 1979) would be firmly established by Kindergarten age. For the LPA children, however, the same opportunities do not appear to have been provided. Only 15% of these children were exposed to books prior to their first birthday, and over a third were not read to on a frequent basis until past the age of two.

Hence it appears that HPA children have been given a decided edge in that their understanding of what books are and how they function may be a result of their earlier exposure to texts.

The reasons why parents chose a particular age to read to their children are presented in Figure 15. parents of LPA children gave attention span and the calming effect the story had on the children as the main reasons for choosing a particular age for initiating joint reading episodes. As one parent noted "now he sits and listens and it's easier to read to him. We tried it (at a) younger (age) with his brother but it didn't work so we held off with Jason until he was about two and a half." One may hear echos of Heath's (1983) Roadville parents in this remark where sitting and listening were very acceptable behaviours. Brailsford's (1985) observations of Jeanette and Marvin's

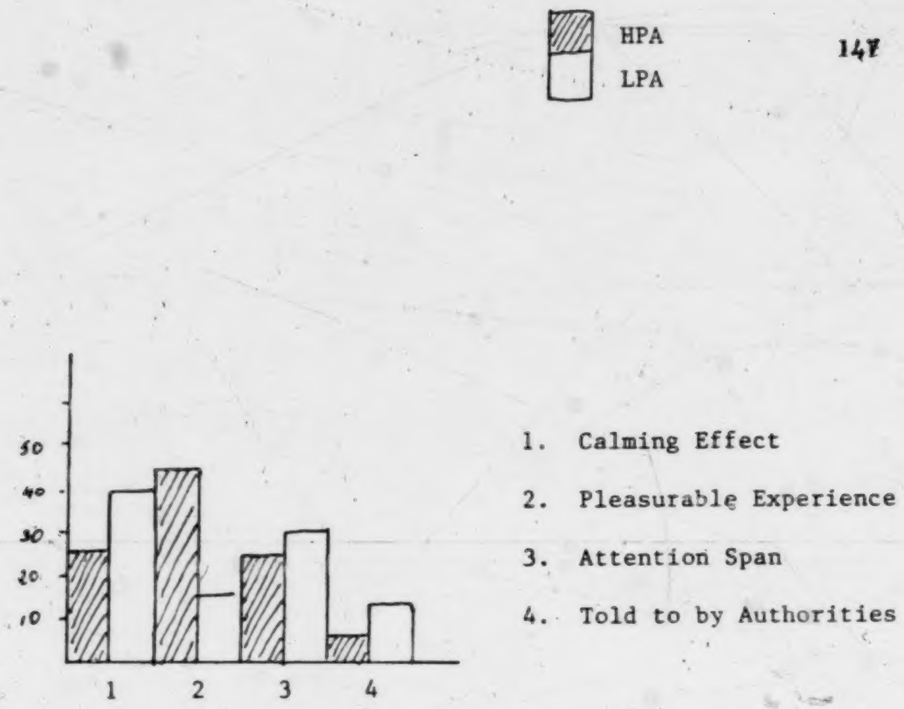


Figure 15

Why Reading Sessions Began

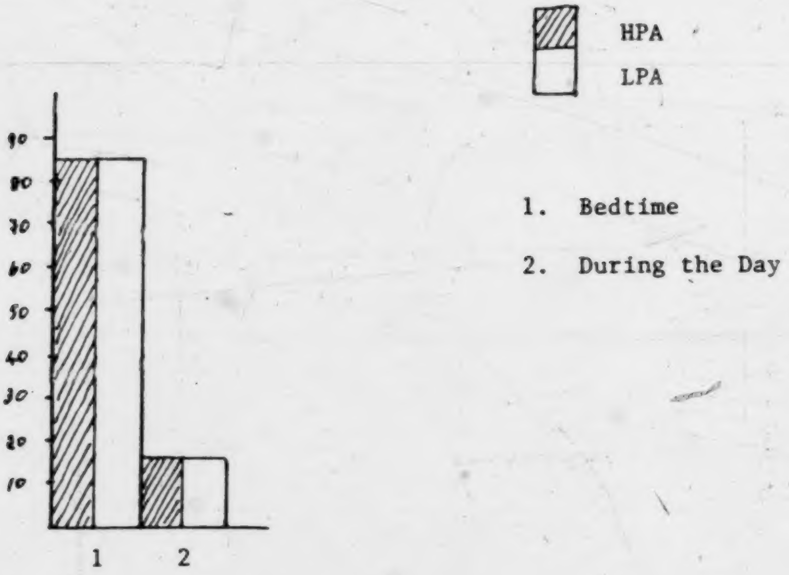


Figure 16

Reading Time

(LPA children) parents' reportings of their reading sessions provide similar findings.

The parents of HPA children noted that the reading sessions had primarily been pleasurable experiences for them and their children, confirming Holdaway's (1979) observations, although the calming effect and the child's attention span accounted for a substantial number of responses as well. One mother commented "we'd curl up together. Sometimes I'd get right into bed with her and we'd read a couple of stories. I think she knows this was her own time with me so we'd joke and laugh as well as read. It was fun. She liked it. Me too especially when I wasn't pressed for time." "The warm environment" referred to by Doake (1981, p.221) and the special attention time noted by Holdaway (1979) are mirrored in this mother's feelings.

Some parents mentioned that they had read or heard that reading to children was a good thing to do. "I read an article in Chatelaine that said if you read to them they'll be better readers," said one parent.

Overall, however, the enjoyment and pleasure which parents of HPA children commented upon as a dominant feature for initiating reading sessions during their children's very early years would appear to be less obvious in the reports of parents of LPA children. Similar conclusions were reached by Brailsford (1985).

Overwhelmingly bedtime was the favoured moment for reading as noted in Figure 16, confirming Schickedanz and Sullivan's (1984) observation that the bedtime story was the families' most common literacy ritual. The parents of both HPA and LPA children had similar responses. Some reading was carried out during the day but it was far less prevalent than the nighttime episodes. "That's our quiet time. We've busy lives and everything is in a whirl during the day. Seems like a good time for a book, just before bed," reported one father. Thus the bedtime framework, that is the routine (Snow, 1983) for story reading would appear to provide guidelines for the preparation of reading--book selection, paying attention to the reader, things to talk about during the special time, etc.

Two thirds of HPA and LPA children were read to at least once a day, although it should be noted that a third of LPA children only interacted with books with their parents or significant others only three to four times a week (see Figure 17). The comments of one mother "Oh! We wouldn't go a day without a book being read. It'd be like not brushing your teeth. We always do it even when we've company" synthesized what many parents said. Therefore if children are read to every day they would be exposed to nearly 400 such literary encounters per year, many of them involving the rereading of stories. In addition if the parents started reading at about one year of age as was generally noted for parents of HPA children (see Figure 14), approximately 1,000 book encounters would have been presented to these children. It may be suggested therefore that for HPA children in particular, the opportunities to encounter decontextualized print were maximized. The findings of this study therefore confirm the observations of Doake (1981) and the results for some of the children in Wells' (1983) longitudinal study. Hence it may be stated that frequent reading to children is a common practice for parents of HPA children in particular.

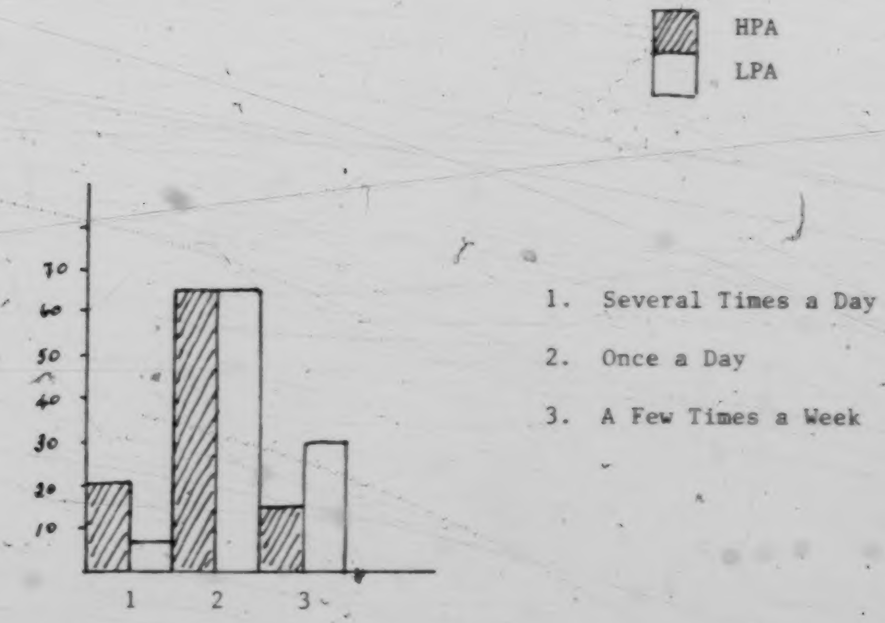


Figure 17

Frequency of Reading Events

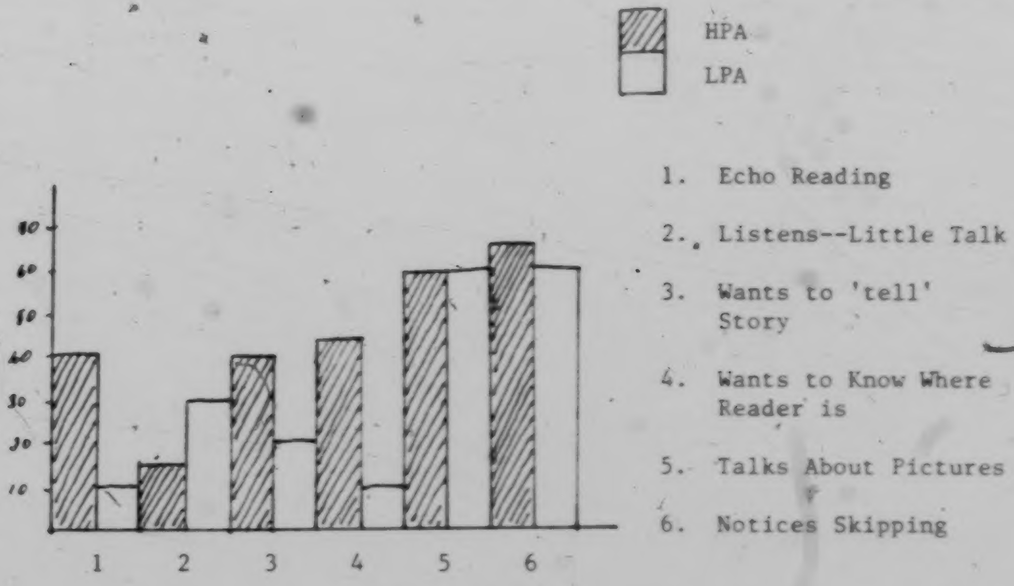


Figure 18

Characteristics of Reading Sessions

When parents commented on the characteristics of the reading sessions, they focussed primarily on their children's behaviours rather than their own. This is not surprising as the researcher had advised them initially that the study focussed on the children's rather than their own interactions. Commonalities among children behaviours are presented in Figure 18. (It should be noted that several parents gave several reasons; therefore the totals exceed 100).

The most prevalent characteristics for both groups of children were talking about the illustrations and noticing when their parents skipped or changed a part of the story. That HPA and LPA children noticed deviance from the text indicates that they were forming a concept of the permanency of the printed word, that what is written is cast in stone as it were, and that readers do not have the "right" to change the author's words, because changing the words changes the author's intended meaning. One parent noted "she gets mad if I change things. She notices my mistakes." Another commented "Sometimes I deliberately change things just to tease him. He'll notice for sure. He'll laugh if it's really silly like 'they fell in the water and got dry' and say 'Oh! Dad.' But skipping a page or some other part is not funny to him. He wants it all read the same way everytime." Comments such as these demonstrate that the children not only have an overall schema for the story but have mastered many of the syntactic structures within it. They know what fits in that story, bringing "what is already in the mind to what is on the page" (Holdaway, 1979, p.211). In other words, the children as listeners were predicting what was to come in the text and because of their knowledge of the text, that is their memory of it, insisted that the surface structures remain constant so that the deep structures or meanings also remain constant. Doake (1981) and Cochran-Smith (1984) among others, have observed similar responses on the part of children to text.

Using text illustrations also appears to be a usual practice during story reading. Sixty percent of parents of both HPA and LPA children remarked that talking about the pictures was an integral part of the reading sessions. "We always flip through the book and look at the pictures when it's new (story). But even with old ones we talk about them. She notices something just about every time" said one mother. Brailsford (1985) noted similar behaviours for both HPA (Janice) and LPA (Marvin) children. The pictures mediate the printed words, leading from the decontextualized to the contextualized. One may suggest that the illustrations provide a bridge for the "disembedded thinking" (Donaldson, 1978) necessary to understand the words. The visual props of the illustrations highlight the author's message providing contextual support for the print. It is interesting that the above mother noted that her daughter focussed upon different aspects of the illustration even after repeated readings. It is suggested that as the child approaches deeper meanings for the story (Martinez and Roser, 1985) a "new" look at the illustrations provides support for the deeper understandings.

Generally therefore it may be said that the pictures are "special mediating symbols which replace the real environments of conversation" (Holdaway, 1979, p.54) and are integrated by the participants in the reading events as support systems or visual scaffolds to assist in interpreting the author's messages.

The children who were High Print Aware echoed their parents' reading, wanted to know where the reader was reading and attempted to tell the story themselves more frequently in each instance than their LPA peers (Figure 18). One parent of a HPA child commented "she reads behind me. Drives me crazy but even when I tell her to stop (instances of this request on the readings) she does it again in a few minutes." The parent of a LPA remarked "sometime ago she started to echo me. Everything I read, she'd say the words real fast to catch up with me. [I] told her she couldn't do that 'cause I lost my place. Gets on your nerves, you know, like listening to the radio when it's not really tuned in." Doake (1981), Juliebo (1985) and Brailsford (1985) among others have observed echoing as a characteristic of reading development behaviour. That HPA children use it more frequently than LPA youngsters may be the result of the level of tolerance demonstrated by the parents as noted above or their desire to get more involved in the story reading. If restrictions for echo reading are imposed by the reader as in the case of the LPA child above, one "strategy to make stories accessible to themselves through reading-like behaviour" (Doake, 1981, p.446) is denied.

Evidence (collaborated by the parents' comments of HPA children) of requesting to know where the reader was at, even in the unfamiliar story, was demonstrated in the tape transcriptions. "Are you here, Mom?"; "Are you reading this part now?" were comments made by the children. "She wants to know where I am so I show her with my finger" reported one mother. One may suggest therefore that these children are curious about the aspect of print, realize that the print brings the message and perhaps because of the pointing directed to the print by their parents, may be coming to grips with the directionality of print. As noted earlier, in the statistical analysis, parents requested that their children read particular words in the familiar text. Hence focus on the orthographic features of the story would appear to indicate that HPA children had moved, developmentally, beyond the essence of the story itself and were taking initial steps to examine, albeit peripherally, the form in which the story was presented. In other words, they were building concepts that the black marks on the page "present language without an immediate sensory context" (Holdaway, 1979, p.62). Brailsford (1985) noted that the HPA children in her study "became increasingly interested in the graphic form that encapsulated the story's message" (p.565).

That parents of HPA children reported that their children wanted to "tell" the story more frequently than did parents of LPA children was also noted. "I read a part, and then he tells me the next bit" reported one parent. One may see such an activity as similar to Doake's (1981) completion reading. "Sometimes she gets the words nearly right. She knows the story, that's for sure, when she does it," commented another parent. Statistical significance was also found for this strategy. However, perhaps it is more interesting that parents are aware that they are providing structures which allow their children to participate so highly in the story reading session. Whether they are aware of the value of the use of this strategy was a question not addressed in this study. It is also of interest to note that none of the parents mentioned that their children "read" a part; rather "tell" or "he goes on to the next part" were the expressions used. One may presume therefore that the parents do not see this behaviour as "real reading." This is contrasted to their remarks on shared reading where the word "with" was used more often by all parents than the word "to." "When I read with him--" or "when we read together--" were common comments. In other words, parents of HPA children in particular see their offspring as dual participants in the reading activity and provide opportunities for them to be active collaborators in the event.

It should be noted that 30% of the parents of LPA children remarked that their children listened rather than talked during the reading. Transcripts of the recordings confirmed this observation. Similar observations were noted by Brailsford (1985) for the three LPA children in her study. It may be suggested that for these children, a more passive role in the activity is expected and accepted.

C. Parent Reading Background

The majority of parents (regardless of whether their children were H or LPA) felt that they had learned to read at school (see Figure 19) although some did note that they knew how to read prior to school entry. "I remember being able to read those See Spot books and no one else could in the class. I'd read them in a flash and all the other kids would have to say S-p-o-t over and over before they got it," remarked one parent. Several parents did not know, however, when they learned to

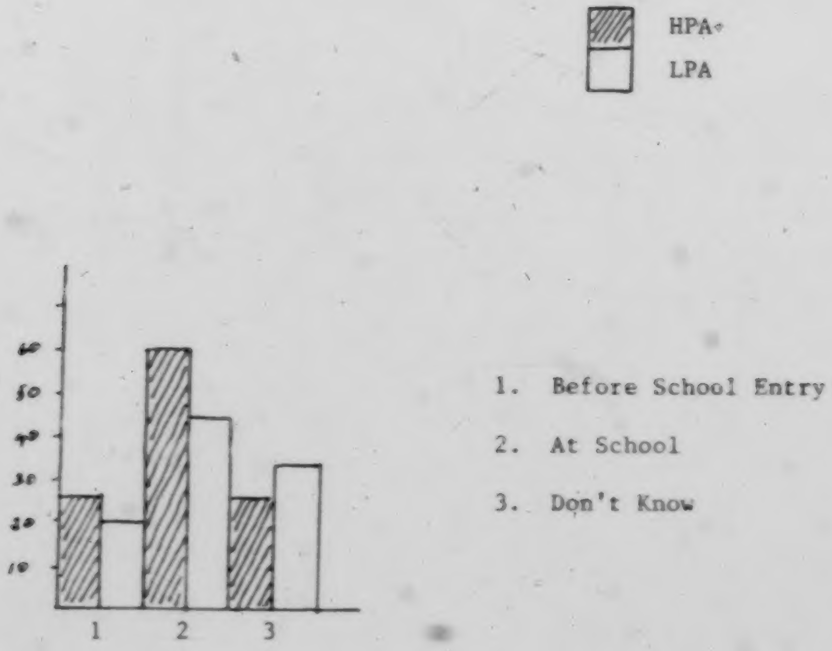


Figure 19

When Parents Learned to Read

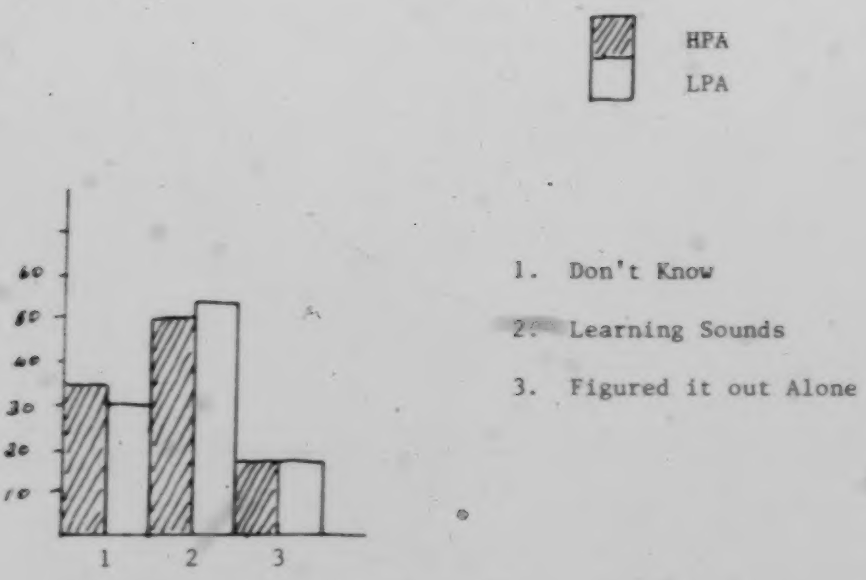


Figure 20

How Parents Learned to Read

read. In addition, many had little recollection of learning to read or how the process came about (Figure 20). "I guess I just picked it up somehow, learned the words bit by bit till I knew them all," was the comment of one parent. However, the majority of parents were of the opinion that they learned the names and the sounds of the letters and progressed from there. This is not surprising as the majority of these parents would have been in primary school in the late 1950's, a period when sight words and sounding out unfamiliar words would have held sway as prime instructional methods. More interesting is the fact that a small number of parents of both HPA and LPA children were of the opinion they taught themselves to read. "I just figured it out, like a puzzle I suppose, and then I was reading" noted one father. "I don't think anyone taught me." Present understanding of the process of learning to read would lead one to assume that some significant other in this father's early years, mediated the printed word for him. The fact that this same father noted that his own father was most influential in helping him to become a reader, gives further credence to the idea that print was mediated in the home. Many other parents also remarked that their parents had considerable impact on making them readers (see Figure 21). "My dad read a lot and was always telling us how books were great. He used to say 'You're never alone if you've a book.' They were both great readers" remarked one mother. However, the great majority noted that teachers played an important role in their becoming readers. One father of a LPA child commented "there was a Mrs. _____ in grade 3. She really turned me on to books. She always knew if I'd like a book and

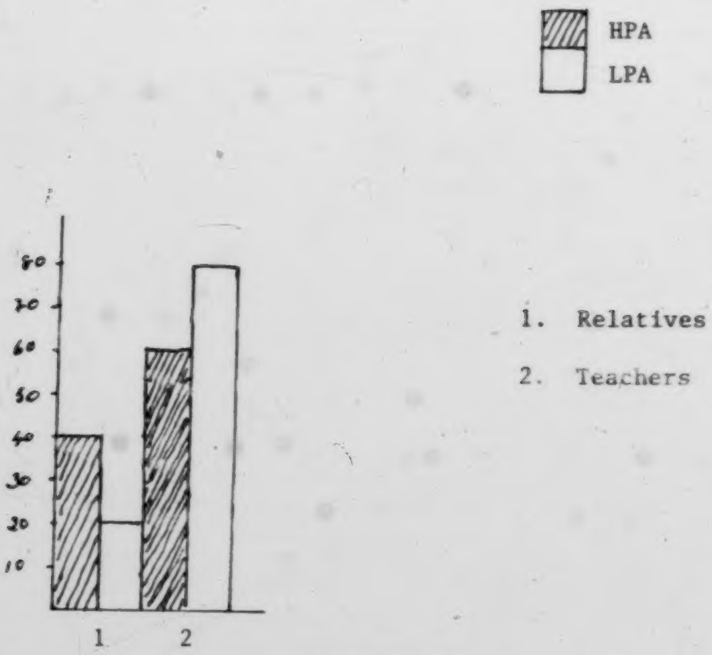


Figure 21

Influence of Others on Parents' Early Reading

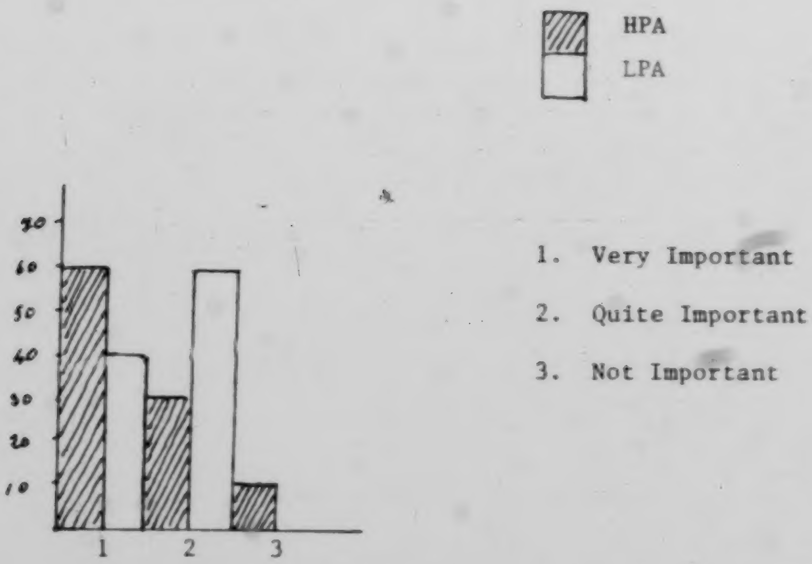


Figure 22

Importance of Reading for Parents

keep it aside for me. She was super that way with kids; knew what they'd like." One can catch the enthusiasm this father generates reminiscing about his early years as a reader--the thrill of a good book and the fact that someone knew him so well that the book became a bond between the two of them. For those who noted that relatives played a significant part, older siblings, grandparents as well as parents were mentioned.

As to how important reading was presently in the parents' lives, Figure 22 provides the results. Generally the parents of HPA children noted that reading was an integral part of their lives, both for work purposes and for enjoyment. "I've to read a lot of reports for my work. A lot of my day is spent reading really so for me it is very important" remarked one father. "I couldn't do my work unless I was able to get through a lot (of reading) every day." In addition, many noted the pleasurable aspect of reading. One mother reported "I read every day. That's my time for me. I'd really miss it, so I guess for me it's very important." One may suggest therefore that for the parents of HPA children in particular, reading is a focal part of their lives. Doake (1981) noted similar observations for two of the parents in his study. Thus HPA children would be more likely to see models of reading than would their LPA peers.

The majority of parents of both HPA and LPA children rated themselves as either very good or good readers (see Figure 23). Generally they felt that speed of reading and quantity of books read were the qualifications necessary for being a good reader. The 20% of parents of HPA children who rated themselves as not very good did so

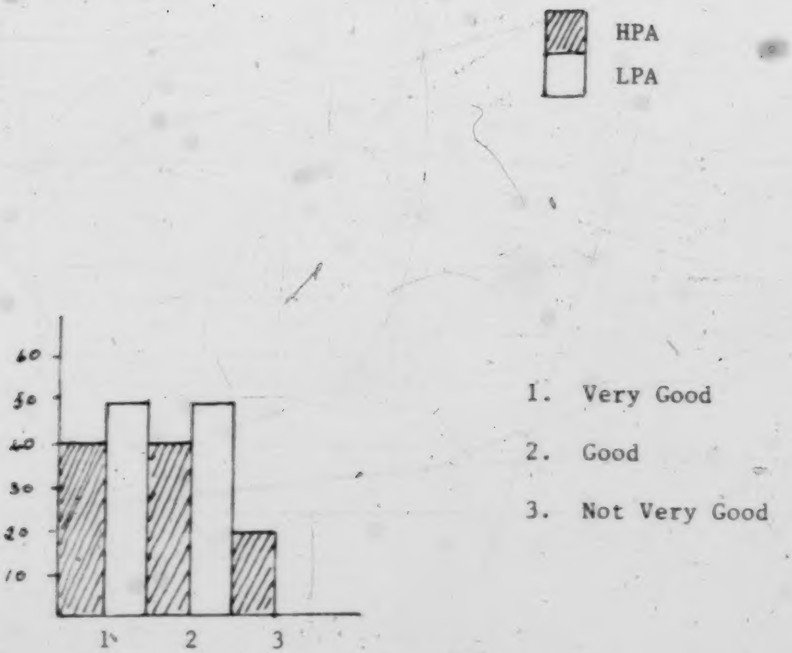


Figure 23

Parents' Self-Descriptions As Readers

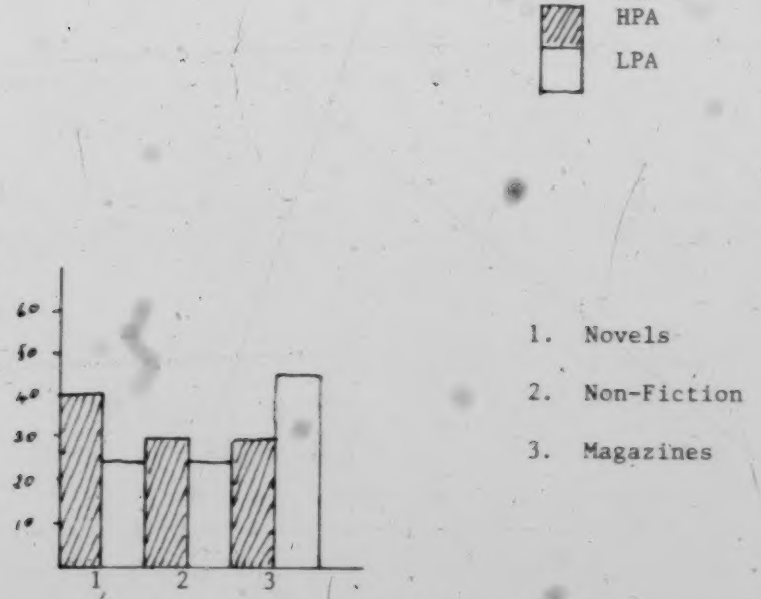


Figure 24

Materials Read at Home by Parents

because they didn't read very often for pleasure or of necessity at work. As one mother commented "I don't get time to read for myself, what with the kids and everything. I guess though if I were a real good reader, I'd make the time. Takes me ages to get through a book." Here again the emphasis is on speed.

Figure 24 presents the results of materials read at home. There were few differences noted between the two groups generally although 45% of the parents of LPA children read magazines in preference to other materials, and the main choice for parents of HPA children was novels. One may assume that the time commitment to a novel as opposed to a magazine might present children with strong modelling of reading behaviour although it may also be suggested that much of the parental reading takes place when the chidren have gone to bed. However, it should be noted that all of the parent subjects mentioned they read at home indicating that literacy modelling was evident to the children at home. Doake (1981) and Brailsford (1985) among others observed a variety of materials in the homes and although parents in the present study gave their preferences for their own reading materials, many different textual materials were said to be in the homes.

D. Learning to Read

In answering the question "what do you think story-reading sessions do for your child," parents often had difficulty defining what they thought. Their responses were presented in Figure 25. Parents of LPA children were of the opinion that their children learned to pay

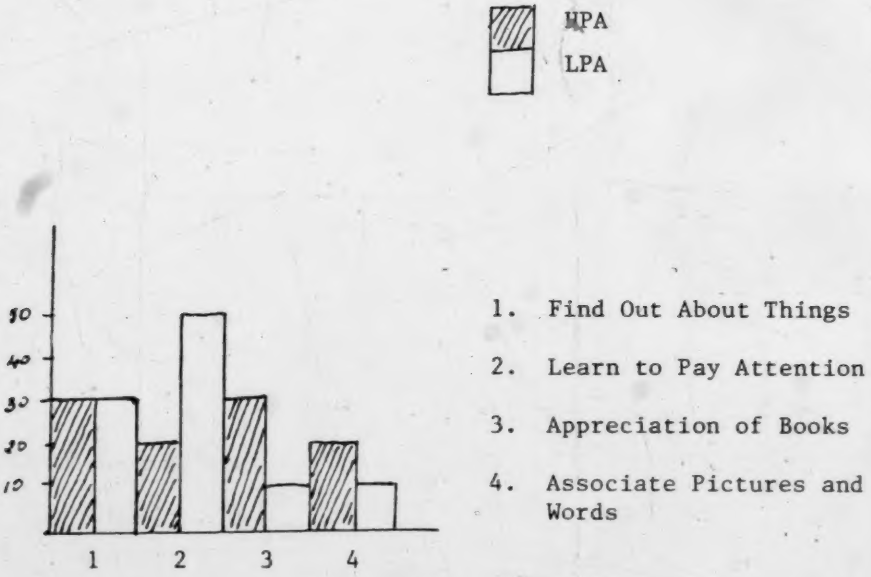


Figure 25

Effects of Story Reading Sessions

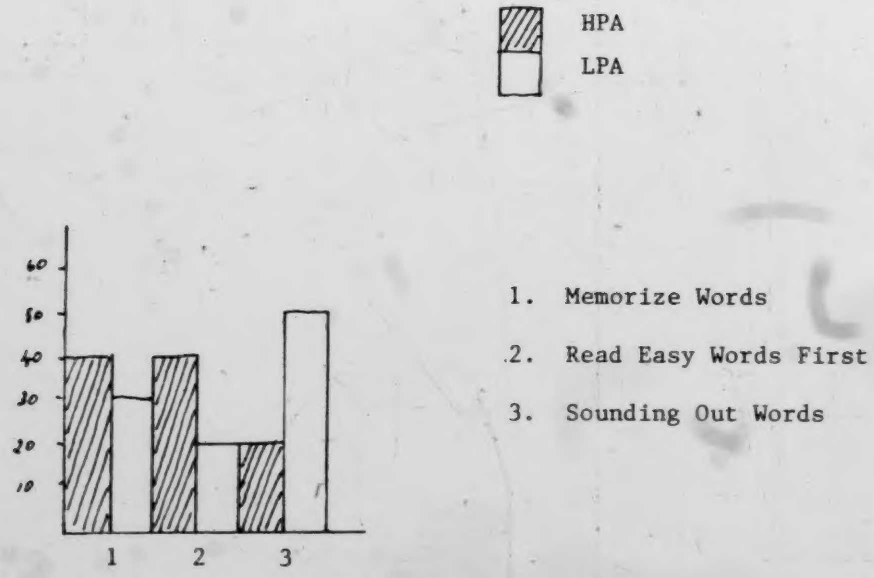


Figure 26

Parental View of How Children Learn to Read attention "'cause that's what they have to do in school" as one father reported. In other words, the listening behaviour (see Figure 18) prepares the child to be attentive in school. Perhaps these parents are implicitly saying "you'll learn if you listen and don't talk" (Heath, 1983). Parents of HPA children felt that expanding world knowledge and developing an appreciation for books may be the outcome of the interactive sessions.

One parent noted "when we read with him, he finds out things he didn't know before and that's important. He'll find out too that you can learn from books just like doing other things." One may suggest that this parent is referring to the transference of knowledge found in print to everyday situations, that is, transcending the "there and then" of events in books to daily experiences (Feuerstein, 1979). Only a few parents mentioned the association of pictures and words as an outcome of the reading sessions. Perhaps parents see this characteristic as a more formal instruction, a procedure to be encouraged at school rather than in the home.

In offering their opinions in how they thought children learned to read (see Figure 26), parents of both HPA and LPA children focussed primarily on the grapho-phonic aspects of the task, procedures similar to those by which they themselves had learned (Figure 20). Memorizing words (sight vocabulary) and reading easy words first were the main choices for parents of HPA children. However, the parents of LPA children felt that sounding out words was the best way for children to master the reading task. "If he knows the sounds, he'll know all the words and have no trouble" remarked a father. "He won't get stuck on

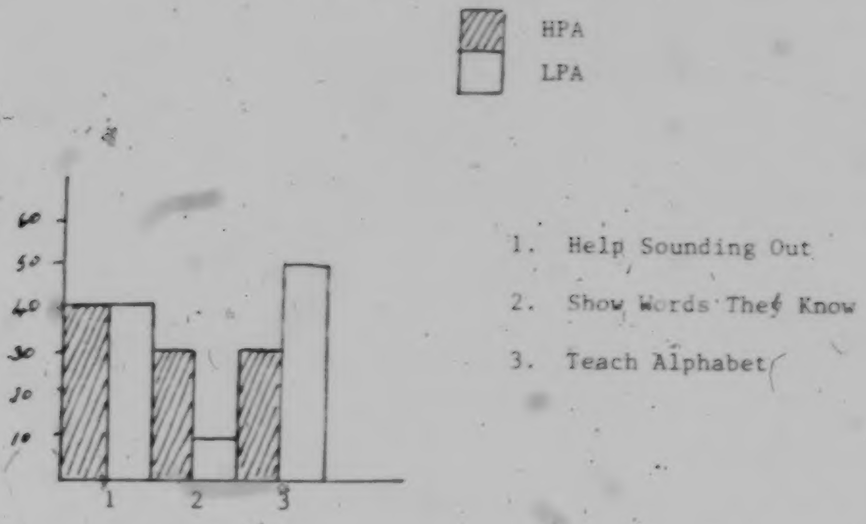


Figure 27

How Parents Can Assist Children Become Readers words that way." One would presume therefore that the successful strategies which parents employ during the reading sessions--completion reading, the contextualizing of print for their children, echo reading, etc., are not viewed, explicitly at least, as being techniques for learning to master print.

This assumption is reaffirmed in the views of how parents may assist their children in becoming readers. As Figure 27 demonstrates, again the emphasis is on more formal activities such as sounding out words and having the children attend to words they know. Of interest also was the fact that fifty percent of the parents of LPA children were of the opinion that knowing the alphabet was an integral part of learning to read. That none of the parents saw themselves as being responsible for teaching their children to read is understandable. However they did feel that although their role was a supportive one, they had a definite responsibility in making sure that their children would be ready for reading instruction in Grade One. Preparation for this "readiness" would apparently come about by having a knowledge of grapho-phonics, confirming Hayden's (1981) finding that parents of both good and poor readers considered good decoding skills as necessary for successful reading. It is further suggested that the pleasurable and enjoyable parent-child interactions during the home reading episodes are viewed as procedures quite separate to and different from the formal learning necessary to encourage reading ability.

SUMMARY

To summarize, therefore, it may be seen that generally parents of both HPA and LPA children had a good variety of materials in the home. Their concepts of themselves as good or very good readers were similar and in addition the age at which they started to read or how they were taught to read were rather alike. Bedtime was the prevalent time of the day for joint reading and the frequency of reading events were similar. Their children liked the same kinds of books. Both groups of parents focussed on the grapho-phonic aspects of reading when asked how their children might become readers which they felt would happen when they went to school. Both groups of children used the illustrations as meaning props. In addition, they noticed reader deviations from the text.

For the parents of HPA children, reading to their children was started at an early age, generally prior to 18 months. They were frequent library users both for themselves and their children, had more books in the home, and they took pleasure in reading with their youngsters. Generally there was a negotiation factor for book choices and their children often asked where (at which place) the parents were when reading. Reading as an activity was an important factor in their own lives both for work and pleasure. In addition, these parents accepted the echo reading of their children and structured the reading episodes to allow for completion reading on the part of their children. In essence, therefore, the parents of HPA children and their youngsters were collaborators in the reading event more frequently than were parents of LPA children.

The latter group made use of library facilities rather infrequently and reading in their own lives was not a central feature. They initiated reading at an older age. These parents were often the selectors of the book to be read and they expected their children to be good listeners rather than dialoguers during the event. In addition, it appeared that their children were less interested than their HPA peers in focussing on some of the print in the book.

Overall therefore it may be suggested that the home environments of HPA and LPA children appear to differ somewhat for certain contextual factors—age when reading is started, use of the library, the importance of books in the home, how books are chosen to be read and the fact that reading with children is a pleasurable and enjoyable activity. Brailsford (1985) in her ethnographic study of six High and Low Print Aware children noted many similar observations.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter presented the descriptive results of the study wherein relationships between the children's level of literacy, and the strategies employed by the participants, the environmental factors in the home and the contextualization of the stories to the children's world knowledge were explored. Discussion on the relationships followed as to the similarities and differences between parents of HPA and parents of LPA children and LPA and HPA children.

The relationship between the contextual factors in the home and the level of the children's literacy development were examined by interviewing parents about their children's and their own reading background, the availability of books in the home and how the parents considered how children became readers.

Chapter VII contains a summary of the study, its findings and conclusions. Implications for teachers, parents and further research are also presented.

CHAPTER VII

FINDINGS CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This chapter contains a brief summary of the study, the main findings and conclusions. Recommendations for further research and implications for teachers and parents are also presented. This chapter concludes with a final statement.

INTRODUCTION

Reading stories to children is an integral part of family life for many youngsters. Each night, parent and child find that special moment together when both curl up with a story book. As the adult reads the text, the child becomes involved in and enveloped with the language of text. The interactions which evolve from the story book episodes mirror the dialogic nature of everyday interactions except in this situation they have the special feature of being dependent upon the story. Through oral language the parent mediates the printed word, brings the story within the realm of the child's experience and together parent and child create a context for interpretation. The participants' questions and responses which emanate from the story book events prompt the child to read the world before he/she reads the word (Freire, 1983).

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature of interaction between parents and children within a joint book reading situation. In particular the main focus for the study investigated the questioning and response strategies of fathers/mothers and children as they shared a familiar and unfamiliar story. A secondary focus was to examine the relationship between a) the strategies employed, b) the contextualization of the stories to the children's world knowledge, and c) environmental factors and the children's level of literacy development. An assessment task--Concept About Print Test, and informal interviews were utilized as instruments for data collection.

The sample for the study consisted of 27 Kindergarten children, 20 fathers and 20 mothers. The children were selected by randomized sampling from four Kindergartens in suburban and rural communities. Thirteen of the children were read to by both parents; fourteen were read to by one parent, seven by fathers, seven by mothers.

After parents consented to participate in the study, they read three stories to their children--a) a library book, b) a familiar or favourite book found in the home, and c) an unfamiliar story prepared by the researcher. Each reading episode was recorded on audio cassette, the latter two of which were then transcribed verbatim. The library book recording was not transcribed; rather it was used as a "warm-up" for the participants.

Message units, that is dialogue which did not include the text of the story, were identified for fathers, mothers, children read to by fathers and children read to by mothers, and analyzed according to a system of clarification strategies--Requests (Form-Function) Responses (Form-Function). Data collected from this analysis were subjected to statistical analysis by means of a multivariate analysis of variance

(MANOVA). When significance was found, a further analysis using Wilks Lambda approximate F test procedures was performed. Descriptive analysis was also carried out which focussed on the environmental factors, strategies employed by parents and children, how the stories were contextualized for the children and the children's level of literacy development.

MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions are drawn from the present study taking into account the limitations stated previously in Chapter I. The conclusions reflect the nature of the interactions between parent and child within joint-book reading situations.

The statistical findings of the present study may be summarized as follows in light of the model of emergent reading proposed in Chapter III.

1. Fathers and mothers do not differ with respect to the strategies employed. Similar findings were noted for children read to by fathers and children read to by mothers.
2. Differences were noted for the kinds of strategies employed by the participants in familiar and unfamiliar stories.

Children demonstrate their willingness (intentionality) to participate in the reading event by employing the Response strategies of Reinforcement (Function) and Repetition (Form). Parents and children build up shared meanings related to the text (interpretation of meaning). Parents frame what they consider to be important facets to be focussed upon within a new story using Specification Requests (Function). The children's Confirmation responses demonstrate their understanding of the new information. Additionally the children's responses of Text Completion (a) and (b) (Function) indicate they have interpreted correctly the author's meaning, and provide evidence of their facility (competence) with the text.

Parents regulate their children's behaviour within the reading situation by using a Request (Form) of Text Command (a), which allows the children to show their competence within familiar stories. The Request strategies of Confirmation and Non-Confirmation (Function) employed by the parent when the book is not familiar also indicate whether the children are grasping or are missing important features of the story. That is, parents continually regulate the child's learning in order that he/she may experience success with the story.

Parents in employing Text Prediction (a) (Function) as a request strategy scaffold the reading situation and encourage their child to demonstrate (accountability) their knowledge of the familiar text. Children, on the other hand, by their Non-Confirmation responses (Function) advise the parent that they are in need of further information, i.e. *scaffolding*.

In general therefore the statistical findings of this study signify that the strategies used by parents and children in joint book reading demonstrated their intentionality and reciprocity. As parents assigned meaning to concepts, as they regulated the children's behaviour by checking to determine their grasp of the situation, parents structured the reading situation so that their children could demonstrate their competence and success as learners of print. They involved them as collaborative readers of books. The level and kinds of collaboration, however, appeared to be dependent upon the children's familiarity with the story.

CONCLUSIONS FROM DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Three questions examined the relationship between the child's level of literacy development and a) the strategies employed by the participants within the joint-book episodes, b) the contextualization of the stories to the children's world knowledge, and c) the environmental factors in the home.

The descriptive findings are summarized in the following points:

1. Parents of HPA and LPA children use request and response strategies which are similar in nature and preference regardless of the level of literacy development of their children.
2. Children do not differ in terms of preferred strategies.
3. Children do differ in the frequency of use of some of the preferred strategies.
3. Parents of HPA children and the HPA children themselves contextualize textual information within their own background experiences more often than do parents of LPA children and LPA children (transcendance).
4. Certain environmental factors such as the age when joint-book reading becomes a regular feature of the child's life, use of the

public library, negotiation for book choices, the importance of reading to the parent's life style and the acceptance and encouragement of reading-like behaviours (echo and completion reading) were behaviours more likely to be evidenced in the homes of HPA children.

Little differentiation was recorded for the nature and quantity of parental request strategies regardless of the familiarity of text or their children's literacy level. Confirmation and Specification were the most preferred strategies. Similar results were found for parent response strategies with respect to the nature and frequency of strategies employed. However, familiar text for parents of LPA children provided more instances of elaboration than parents of HPA children.

Similar request strategies were used by H and LPA children in both familiar and unfamiliar texts. However for HPA children, Confirmation as a strategy occurred more often in familiar texts than for their LPA peers. The reverse trend was noted for unfamiliar stories it. The reason for such differences would appear to rest in the fact that HPA children attempted to build deeper understandings of what is entailed in the familiar texts while LPA children appeared to focus on the more superficial and surface aspects of the story.

With respect to the children's response strategies, differences were also noted only for familiar stories. LPA children were more frequent in their use of Confirmation as a strategy.

The conclusions which may be reached from the above data would suggest that rather than the nature of request and response strategies employed by the parents of H and LPA children, it is the frequency with which a particular strategy is used within a particular type of text by H and LPA children which may indicate the child's level of literacy development. If parents of H and LPA children do not differ as suggested by the data, one may propose that both parents of both H and LPA children provide similar linguistic experiences with which their children may interact. The crucial factor would therefore appear to be how frequently the child, be he/she HPA or LPA, is given the advantage of the joint-book reading situation, to verbally interact. High Print Aware children, as previously mentioned were read to from an earlier age than their LPA peers. Hence it may be suggested that HPA children had more opportunities to interact during joint-reading episodes.

With respect to the children's level of literacy development and the contextualizing of stories to the children's world knowledge, data from the study demonstrate that HPA children and their parents brought background knowledge to bear upon the texts more frequently than LPA children and their parents. The transcendent feature of the mediated learning experience would appear to be integral to understanding decontextualized text. As noted in Chapter III, print is constant; only our interpretation of it changes. The HPA children and their parents relate the here and now of the story to the there and then of their experiences. Such interaction is central to becoming successful readers. As new experiences were related to previous happenings, the HPA children expanded their cognitive horizons and modified their old knowledge in light of the new. In essence therefore, evidence of transcendence would appear to suggest that HPA children were reading the world as the world was read to them (Friere, 1983).

The part of the study which explored the relationship between the environmental factors in the home and the children's level of literacy development demonstrated several pertinent features. As clearly indicated, parents of HPA children had initiated joint-book reading prior to their children attaining 18 months; they were frequent users of the library; they noted the pleasurable and enjoyable aspects of reading with their children; they were frequent in negotiating the choice of book to be read with their children; echo reading was accepted and completion reading encouraged. The same behaviours were not as frequently reported by the parents of LPA children. The collaborative aspect of joint-book reading was less evident in the remarks of these parents.

It appears therefore that parents of HPA children view readings in a different light than do parents of LPA children. The main supportive atmosphere which by its nature would appear to be conducive to learning on the part of the child, is not as obvious within the joint-reading episodes for LPA children. Reading in the latter situation appears to be a culturally dictated activity, one in which one engages for future benefit only. That is, encouraged by "experts" in the field, these parents know they should read to their children but are less inclined to find the joint-book reading episode a pleasurable and enjoyable activity at the moment of reading. Although it is possible that parents of HPA also are coerced by society to read to their children, the bedtime story ritual which has become an integral part of their families' lives encapsulates the sharing of an enjoyable experience, one which is pleasurable for its own sake rather than the future rewards it may bring.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

This study focussed on the nature of the interactions between parent and child in a joint-reading situation. The theoretical model presented in Chapter III concentrated on the social, psychological and linguistic features of that interaction.

In general it may be stated that parents and children, as evidenced by the dialogical interactions which occurred during the reading event were co-participants in that event. That is, the children were not simply read to; rather the parents read with them, the textual information being interspersed by either participant with requests and responses. For the HPA children in particular, participation was not only encouraged but fostered as well. It is concluded therefore that joint-book reading is truly a shared event, one in which each participant seeks and offers information. As intermediaries between their children and the print, parents deliberately attempted to have their children join in in the event by monitoring their comprehension, selectively choosing which features of the story to focus upon, providing occasions for the children to demonstrate their knowledge and competency and generally being attuned to the child's needs and interests. Children on the other hand demonstrated they were attending to the event, sought clarification for ideas presented within the text and responded to the features highlighted by their parents. They made efforts particularly within the familiar story to focus upon the actual text by completion reading or attending to discrete words. Knowing the text, being familiar with its content allowed the children the opportunity to move beyond the events and characters presented within the story to focus upon different features--predicting information to be read or the actual graphics.

It may be seen therefore that for most of the children in this study, the first steps to reading success had been taken; they were becoming readers and were attempting to make sense of decontextualized print by using this world knowledge to make inferences and evaluations.

The joint-book reading event is only one of the literacy-promoting episodes in which parents and children are involved in during their everyday lives. That it is the most common event occurring in family life is supported by the literature on early reading development. The interplay between story reading participants as demonstrated by the clarification strategies presented in this study, helped to isolate for a moment in time how parents and children contribute to the process of children becoming readers. The strategies opened a window, albeit very small, on the nature of joint-reading episodes. Vygotsky (1978) contended that children learn how to complete certain tasks on their own by first performing those tasks with the help of others. The dialogic patterns of interaction explored in this study found that within familiar stories in particular, children were mediated to the print during joint-reading episodes.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The focus of this study was on the nature of interaction evolving from joint-book reading events. The results confirm statistically, in many instances, what has been observed in ethnographic case studies. Within the descriptive data, some differences were found with respect to HPA and LPA children. The study relied on the interactions evolving from two stories—one familiar and one unfamiliar—to assess the nature of the interactions. In order to generate further interest in the area of literacy development and to expand the findings of the present study, the following research suggestions are made.

1. The present study only explored the interactions of one group of children and their parents at one particular age level of the former. Additional insights regarding the nature of interaction could be gained through a longitudinal study. Such a project carried on from the age of 18 months to the time of entrance to Grade One and formal instruction in reading would produce more detailed information on the changes in the interactions as the children developed. Tape recordings of familiar and unfamiliar texts could be carried out several times a year which might provide a deeper understanding of how children's awareness of decontextualized print is enhanced by parents in both of these story types. Such a study might demonstrate that there are distinctive interactional features emerging at particular age levels.

2. This study did not provide for the physical observations of parents and children as they read together. A study could be conducted which not only focussed upon the linguistic interactions but took into account the non-verbal affective factors as the task is engaged in. Results from the present study noted that parents of High Print Aware children were more prone to mention the joint-book reading event as one permeated by enjoyment. How does affect support the dialogue which occurs between the dyads? The smiles, the knowing looks, the hugging and other non-verbal behaviours may be important variables to be considered.
3. The study reported here involved clarification strategies central to the development of readers, some of which had previously been explored in case studies. Further research might address the question whether these strategies are characteristic of other middle class home environments in other localities or whether different kinds of interaction are evident in different communities.
4. Much of the research in emergent literacy has investigated adult-child book-related interactions. The focus has been on pre-school age children. As youngsters move into formalized school settings and are exposed to literacy events in a more structured setting, the clarification requests and responses of teachers in a shared book setting are worthy of investigation. What kinds of dialogue evolve? Are children also initiators in the shared book event at school as they are at home? What levels of collaboration exist between teachers and children as they explore print together?

Anderson (in press) may provide further insights into the mediation process of teachers in shared reading episodes, and define more specifically what it is good teachers do during these interactions which foster reading development.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. The results of this study demonstrated that differences with respect to the level of literacy development existed for children attending Kindergarten within the same school system. Teachers should be aware that for some children who enter school, their limited literacy experiences will demand different teaching procedures than for those children who are more print aware. Ensuring that the reading experiences each child encounters in school must match the youngster's needs and interests is crucial to successful reading development. All of the children in the study had mastered some concepts of print. None epitomized the "empty vessel" waiting to be initiated to print by their teachers. Early education educators therefore should recognize the strengths children bring with them from home to the Kindergarten with respect to book knowledge as a result of their joint-reading experiences with their parents and expand their emerging awareness of the functions and pleasures of books.
2. One of the main findings of this study centered upon those parents who successfully contextualized the objects and events contained within the stories. Teachers should make a concerted effort to

transcend the story by relating it to the children's experiences and provide them with concrete experiences which in turn they may relate to books. The cooperative atmosphere of joint-sense making which the parents of High Print Aware children in this study demonstrated should be a prime objective for the shared reading events in primary classrooms. The practices of reading to children presently existing in Kindergartens must move to "reading with" procedures where the questions and responses of the children are treated with the same respect and consideration as those of the teachers. In other words, the shared reading events in the school must mirror the joint reading episodes of the home. Book reading episodes in the schools should be participatory events.

3. The Concept About Print Test (Brailsford, 1985) employed for this study could be a useful tool for the teacher who wishes to analyze the concepts about print possessed by the students in his/her class. By this informal technique the teacher may begin to understand the variability in the levels of literacy knowledge possessed by the children. Because of the detailed knowledge gleaned from the child's responses to the test, experiences with print may be fitted to the child rather than vice versa. The teacher will thus be better equipped towards moving the children to independent reading via a curriculum which has as its core the needs of the child.

4. The "old" concepts of readiness and readiness activities carried out in the school must be taken to task in light of the considerable exposure to print that children have had prior to

school entry, and the experiences they have had with books. Hence teachers must dispense with the notion of the distinctive stage of getting ready to read and must proceed immediately to help children expand their present literacy knowledge.

5. The warmth and genuineness of parental interaction might be emulated in the classroom. Teachers must continue to be learners themselves and to take from the home environment that which promotes the development of literacy. Teachers must be brought to the realization that parents are facilitating "teachers" in their own right and can continue to contribute immensely to their children's literacy awareness.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PARENTS

That parents read to their children is attested to by this study. Less obvious, however, is their knowledge of why they should be involved in this act. In order to encourage parents to view themselves as central to their children's development of literacy awareness within book reading events in particular, the following suggestions are proposed based on the results of this study.

1. Parents of High Print Aware children contextualized more frequently the story book events to their children's lives. This transcendent feature would appear to be a key variable in assisting children to cope with decontextualized print. Parents are very cognizant of the knowledge their children possess and are therefore in a prime position to relate new knowledge to old. Hence they should be

encouraged to associate book experiences to everyday experiences for their children so that their interpretations of the text will be more meaningful to them.

2. Particular book-reading behaviours which seem to foster literacy development were reported as occurring more frequently in the homes of High Print Aware children than in the homes of Low Print Aware peers. Echo reading, completion reading, cooperative reading as specific instances of reading-like behaviour should not only be tolerated but fostered and encouraged. The pausing at predictable points within the text will invite children to participate to their maximum potential.
3. Although the introduction of new stories to the children's repertoire is important, the rereading of familiar or favourite stories is central to the development of literacy awareness. Parents should be made aware that the familiar story allows the child to focus upon different facets of the text, to seek deeper meaning and to explore different concerns as familiarity increases. It encourages the child to read between the lines, to become a critical "reader" even at this very early age.
4. Rather than waiting until children seem to be listening and sitting quietly, parents should be advised that initiating joint-book events at an early age and on a continual basis appear to foster literacy development particularly when the sessions are an enjoyable experience for both participants. Parents should be persuaded to replicate within joint reading events the warm supportive atmosphere which helped their children to learn oral

language. Just as pointing to objects within the environment was a usual procedure for the parents when their children were learning to talk, so occassionally pointing to specific highlighted words on the printed page will move their children to an awareness that the print brings the message.

5. Parents mediate the world for their children and that most do so successfully is evidenced by the extended knowledge children have of their world and the ways in which they can talk about it as they enter Kindergarten. That some are less aware of print in general and books in particular is the result of being mediated to print and books less frequently. Perhaps parents as they bring their children home from the hospital for the first time with detailed instructions as to the physical care of their infants could be presented with a card on which Doake's (1981) understanding of the crucial role they play in helping their children become readers is printed.

> The most important factor in developing their children as readers is not the reading instruction they receive in school but the nature and extent of the book experiences they are able to share before they go to school (p.599).

CONCLUDING STATEMENT

Parents and children are collaborators in joint reading events. As the word is read, so is the world, each participant providing his/her interpretation of what that world is. The interactions explored in this study provide potential insights into how children respond to the literature they listen to. Additionally they provide the researcher with some data as to how children react to textual information and how that information is mediated for them by their parents. Each small piece of datum which allows for a deeper understanding of literacy development is vital in order that the overall picture reflects the rich colours and dimensions of this unique human experience--the becoming of a reader. When researchers combine the information they have gathered from a variety of sources by a myriad of means, they too will move towards reading the world of literacy development.

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APPENDIX A

CLARIFICATION STRATEGIES*

Definitions

A. Clarifying Requests--Function

1. Reproduction

Speaker 2 asks Speaker 1 to repeat all or part of his/her utterance.
(e.g. S_2 "What?" "Pardon?" "What did you say?")

2. Confirmation

a) Speaker 2 uses part or all of Speaker 1's previous utterance in question form.
(e.g. S_1 "I don't know." S_2 "You don't know?")

b) Speaker 1 asks Speaker 2 to confirm or negate the comment of an utterance.
(e.g. S_1 "Is it a nice dream?" "Okay?")

3. Specification

Speaker 1 asks Speaker 2 to produce a specific piece of information.
(e.g. S_1 "What's spinning?" "What did you like best?")

4. Elaboration

Speaker 1 asks Speaker 2 to produce information which will expand the understanding of an utterance presented at an earlier point.
(e.g. S_1 "Where did they go?"
S_2 "To the palace."
S_1 "How come?")

5. Text Prediction

Speaker 1 (Reader) pauses during the reading to encourage Speaker 2 (Listener) to complete the text.
(e.g. S_1 "So off they went ...." (text)

6. Text Direction

a) The speaker requests that a specific piece of text be shown or read.
(e.g. "What's that word?" "Where's the word 'palace'?" "Show me the boy's name.")

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*A coded transcription is presented in Appendix F.

b) The speaker requests that some facet of the illustrations be noted.
(e.g. "Look at that." "See the little bird in the tree?" "Where's the smallest rabbit hiding?")

c) The speaker requests that attention be refocussed on the text.
(e.g. "Listen to this part now." "Where were we?" "Read that part again")

B. Clarifying Requests—Form

1. Declarative Question

a) Speaker 2 repeats all or part of Speaker 1's previous utterance.
(e.g. S_1 ". . . the third girl." S_2 "The third girl?")

b) The use of 'eh' or 'okay' etc. at the end of a declarative sentence.
(e.g. "Perhaps we'll find out when we turn the page, eh?")

2. Convergent Simple Question

The speaker produces a question which demands a yes/no reply.
(e.g. "Were they happy?" "Did you like that part?")

3. Convergent Choice Question

The speaker produces a question which allows for a choice between specified items.
(e.g. "Was it the old ladies or the girl who did the spinning?" "Which rabbit stole the carrots?")

4. Convergent Leading Question

The speaker produces a question which leads the listener to respond in a forced manner.
(e.g. "That's a big one, isn't it?")

5. Signification Question

The speaker signifies he wants a specific piece of information as a response.
(e.g. "Who's that?" "Where did they find her?" "Why did they go away?" "Who married the king?")

6. Open-ended Question

The speaker initiates a topic with an open-ended question which leads to one or several utterances as a response. (e.g. "What do you think is going to happen next?" "How come he does that?")

7. Text Hesitation Question

The speaker (reader) hesitates or pauses during the reading of the text, raising his/her voice on the last word spoken. (e.g. "And so they all lived happily . . . ? . . ." [text].)

8. Text Command Question

a) The speaker commands that a specific part of the written text be noted. (e.g. "Point to the word 'hotel'" "Show me where you are." "Listen to this part again.")

b) The speaker commands that something in the illustrations be noted. (e.g. "Find the bird in the tree." "Look at that girl.")

C. Responses--Function

1. Reinforcement

Speaker 2 repeats all or part of speaker 1's previous utterance. (e.g. S_1 "It's a car." S_2 "A car.")

2. Confirmation

The response provides positive confirmation of previous speaker's utterance. (e.g. S_1 "Was that a good story?" S_2 "Yes." S_1 "You don't like the old queen, do you?" S_2 "No.")

3. Non-Confirmation

A negative response results form the question posed thereby providing a possible opportunity for the speaker(s) to interact further on the topic. (e.g. S_1 "Do you know what a treadle is?" S_2 "No." S_1 "It's a board you press with your foot to make the wheel go round so you can spin.")

4. Specification

The response defines, describes or identifies an object or occurrence.
(e.g. S_1 "So what's that?" S_2 "That's her lip.")

5. Elaboration

The response demonstrates that more general information than specification has been produced on the topic.
(e.g. S_1 "How did they get like that?" S_2 "From spinning the flax and one girl got a hanging lip because she licked the thread.")

6. Text Completion

a) The response provides information which is text exact.
(e.g. S_1 "And so they lived . . . ? . . . " [text]
S_2 "Happily ever after." [text exact])

b) The response provides information which is an approximation of the text.
(e.g. S_1 "And so they lived . . . ? . . . " [text]
S_2 "For ever and ever and they were happy." [text approximate])

7. Text Critique

a) The response is to comment upon or explain some difficulty with the text.
(e.g. "She sure is a crybaby." "That says 'hotel'." "Clogs are sort of shoes." "I can read that word.")

b) The response is to comment upon or explain some difficulty with the illustrations.
(e.g. "That's the one with the lip." "They look happy." "The prince is the one near the princess.")

8. Text Focus

The response encourages focussing or refocussing upon the story content.
(e.g. "We'll find out later." "We'll get to that in the story." "This is a book about . . .")

D. Responses--Form

1. Repetition Response

Speaker 2 repeats all or part of Speaker 1's previous utterance.
(e.g. S_1 "It's a palace." S_2 "A palace.")

2. Yes/No Response

The response confirms or negates the question posed.
(e.g. "Did you like the wedding part?" "No.")

3. Declarative Simple Response

The response defines, describes or identifies an object or occurrence.
(e.g. S_1 "What are they doing?" S_2 "They're helping her spin." S_1 "Why has she a big foot?" S_2 "To make it go up and down.")

4. Declarative Extended Response

The response provides more general information on the topic than was produced in Declarative Simple.
(e.g. S_1 "What are they doing?" S_2 "They're helping her spin 'cause the girl doesn't know how to do it.")

5. Text Recognition

a) The response is a recognition of the exact text.
(e.g. "They built a home.")

b) The response is an approximation of the text.
(e.g. "They built a big house.")

APPENDIX B

Family Reading Questionnaire

General Questions for Interviews

A. Children's Books in the Home

1. How many books are available at home to your child?
2. How is selection made as to the choice of book to be read?
3. What kinds of books are favourites?
4. How are new books introduced into the repertoire?
5. How frequently is the public library visited?

B. Children's Reading Background

6. When was reading to the child started?
7. Why was that particular age chosen?
8. When do the reading events usually take place?
9. How often is _____ read to by you/spouse/significant other?
10. What are the characteristics of the story-reading sessions?

C. Adult Reading Background

11. When did you learn to read?
12. How do you think you learned?
13. Who was most influential in helping you become a reader?
14. How important is reading to you now?
15. How would you describe yourself as a reader?
16. What kinds of materials do you read at home?

D. Learning to Become A Reader

17. What do you think the story reading sessions do for your child?
18. How do children learn to read?
19. How might parents help their children become readers?

(adapted from Doake, 1981)

APPENDIX C

9 Braeside Crescent
Sherwood Park, Alberta
T8A 3N1
September 30, 1984

Dear

Thank you for accepting to participate with your child in my research on early literacy. Previously I have worked for many years with the _______________________ school system and am presently studying kindergarten children's learning activities, in particular their early reading experiences before they encounter formal reading instruction during Grade One. This study has been approved by Mr. ___________, the Superintendent of the system, your principal and kindergarten teacher.

To reiterate what I said to you on the phone a few weeks ago, the study consists of three parts:

1. reading three stories to your child while the tape recorder is on. (you and your child)
2. meeting with you for about 20-30 minutes in mid October to talk about your child's reading experiences. (you and me)
3. my spending about 30 minutes with your child during regular Kindergarten hours at school, reading a story to him/her and talking about it. (your child and me) *

Each envelope contains two books and three blank tape cassettes. You will notice that each tape is marked 1, 2 or 3.
Number 1 should be used for the book borrowed from the County Library.
Number 2 is for the recording of one of your child's favorite stories--a story that he/she often asks to have read over and over again. In order that this book be the child's choice, I suggest a selection of favourites be placed on a table and that he/she be asked to choose which one he/she would like to have read to him. Preferably this selection should not include Alphabet books, Richard Scarry type books, etc., but rather story type books.
Number 3 is for the Grimm's Fairy Tale.

Although the taping of the stories may have an inhibiting effect or distract your child, I would like you to try and read with your child as you usually do. I suggest you have the tape recorder on from the time you decide to read the story until the book is put away and some other activity begins.

In order that I may know the text of your child's favourite story, I will need to borrow that book for a couple of days. Perhaps you could put it in the envelope with the County Library book, the Grimm's fairy tale together with the recorded tapes and the consent form.* (Please reseal the envelope very securely.) It is probably more convenient for you to send everything to school with your child. I will collect the envelope from there and return your child's book via the same route.

As I mentioned on the telephone, anonymity is assured for both you and your child. Also, in order to demonstrate to your school principal that you have accepted participation in the study, the attached consent form should be completed.

If you have nay queries concerning the study or the instructions in this letter, please call me at home (467-6923) or at my office (432-5416).

Again, thank you for participating.

Sincerely yours,

Ruth Hayden

* Consent Form   Please detach and return in the envelope.

My child .... has my permission to spend time with Ruth Hayden during regular school hours at a time convenient for the Kindergarten teacher.

Signed ....

Date ....

APPENDIX D

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APPENDIX E

THE THREE SPINNERS

adapted from the original

by

Grimm

illustrations by D. Hayden and V. Gale

(for a reproduction of the text with accompanying pictures, contact thesis author)

Once upon a time there was a lazy girl who didn't want to spin and nothing her mother could say did a bit of good. In the end, the mother became so angry, so impatient with her, that the daughter began to cry.

At that very moment the noise of a vehicle could be heard, rumbling along the road. The queen happened to be riding past. When she heard the girl's cries, she stopped her carriage, went into the house, and asked the mother why her daughter was weeping so loudly that her sobs could be heard out on the road. The woman was too ashamed to say that her daughter was lazy, so she said: "I can't make her stop spinning; all she wants to do is spin and spin, but I am poor and I can't afford all that flax.

The queen replied: "There's nothing I like more than the sound of spinning, and I'm never happier than when I hear the wheels whir. Let me take your daughter home with me to my palace. I've got plenty of flax, and I'll let her spin to her heart's content." The mother was delighted. So the girl ran to get her jacket and clogs and the queen took her away with her.

When they got to the castle, the queen took her upstairs and showed her four rooms. The first was filled with the most beautiful furniture and the finest clothing the lazy girl had ever seen. "Each day when you have finished spinning," said the queen, "come to this room, choose any dress which takes your fancy, lie on that bed which is as soft as freshly made butter, and dream sweet dreams. But remember, if you don't spin enough flax into yarn each day, you will have to remain in one of the other rooms with only the cold floor or a hard chair to rest upon." The queen then showed her the other three rooms, each filled full of the finest flax, full from floor to ceiling. "Just spin this flax," said the queen, "and when all is turned into yarn, you will have my eldest son, the prince, for a husband."

The girl was frightened to death, for she couldn't have spun all that flax into yarn if she had lived to be three hundred years old. When she was left alone, she began to cry, and she cried for three days without lifting a finger. Each night she curled up on the floor or a chair and tried to sleep. Each day when the queen came in, she became more and more surprised to see that none of the flax had been spun. The girl gave excuses which the queen accepted, until finally, her patience wearing thin, she said: "If you don't start spinning by tomorrow, you will be punished."

When the girl was alone again, she didn't know what to do. In her distress she stood at the window, looking out, and she saw three women coming down the road. The first had a broad, flat foot; the second had a lower lip so big that it hung down over her chin; and the third had a big, broad thumb. They stopped outside the window, looked up, and asked her what the matter was. She told them about the trouble she was in, and they offered to help her. "We'll spin all your flax for you and quickly too," they said, "if only you'll invite us to your wedding and not be ashamed of us; introduce us as your cousins and let us sit at your table." "With all my heart," the girl replied. "Come in. You can start work right away."

So she let the three peculiar women in and made a space for them in the first room of flax. They started spinning. The first woman drew the thread and moved the treadle with her foot; the second wet the thread between her lips; the third twisted it and struck the table with her thumb. Each time she hit the table, a piece of spun yarn fell to the floor. The girl hid the three spinners from the queen and showed her such a pile of yarn every morning she came in that she couldn't praise her enough. At night the three odd women and the girl hurried to the first room, climbed up on the four poster and dreamed sweet dreams. Because the queen was so pleased with the girl, she had her servants bring the best food in the land for her supper each night, although she was surprised at how much the girl could eat and still stay so slim. Meats, vegetables and fruit of all kinds arrived on silver platters. The three women grew fat on all the goodies they ate, but especially so on the gooseberries which were their favorites.

When the first room was empty of flax and spun into yarn, the three women started on the second, and then on the third, until it too was soon empty.

Then the women took their leave and said to the girl: "We've spun all your flax for you, and quickly too. You have been kind to us. But don't forget your promise to invite us to your wedding. It will bring you more good fortune." And off they went.

When the queen saw the empty rooms and the enormous piles of yarn, she arranged for the wedding. She ordered the royal tailors to make a silver gown for the bride and a golden doublet for the groom. The royal carpenters readied their tools to make a beautiful throne for the new princess. The sounds of hammers and mallets could be heard throughout the land.

The prince was delighted to be getting such a hard-working wife. "I've three cousins," said the girl. "They've been very good to me and it wouldn't be right to forget them now in my happiness. Would you let me invite them to the wedding and ask them to sit at my table?" The queen and bridegroom were delighted to agree. "If it makes you happy, then ask them to come," they said.

The bride and groom drove to the wedding feast in a glass coach pulled by six white horses. Just as the wedding supper was about to begin, the three old women appeared. The girl said: "Welcome, dear cousins." "Good heavens," said the prince. "How did you ever come by such peculiar looking cousins?" He went over to the one with the broad, flat foot, and asked: "How did you get such a broad foot?" "By treading," she replied. "By treading." The prince went to the second woman who was by then slurping berries from a spoon and asked: "How did you get that hanging lip?" "By licking," she replied. "By licking." And he asked the third: "How did you get that big, broad thumb?" "By twisting thread," she answered. "By twisting thread." The prince was horrified. "In that case," he said, "my beautiful bride shall never touch a spinning wheel again." So from that moment on, there was never any question of the lazy girl ever having to spin flax again.

KING GRISLY BEARD

adapted from the original

by

Grimm

illustrations by D. Smith

(for a reproduction of the text with accompanying pictures, contact thesis author)

A great king had a daughter who was very beautiful but so proud and haughty and conceited that none of the princes who came to ask for her hand in marriage were good enough for her, and she only made fun of them.

At one time the king, her father, held a feast and invited all her suitors; they sat in a row according to their rank . . . kings and princes, dukes and earls. Then the princess came and passed by them all, but she had something mean to say about every one. The first was too fat. "He's as round as a tub," said she. The next was too tall. "He's like a flag pole," she said. The next was too short. "What a dumpling," she cired. The fourth was not straight enough, so she said he was like a green stick laid to dry over a baker's oven. She had some joke to crack upon every one; but she laughed most of all at a good, young king who was there. "Look at him," she shouted, pointing her finger, "his beard is like an old mop. He shall be called Grisly-Beard." So that young king got the nickname of Grisly-Beard.

But her father was very angry when he saw how his daughter behaved and how she ill-treated all his guests. He vowed that, willing or not, she would have to marry the first beggar who came to the door.

Two days after there came by a musician who began to sing under the window and to beg for money. When the old king heard him he said, "Let him come in." So the servants brought in a dirty-looking fellow and when he had sung before the king and the princess, he begged for money. Then the king said, "You have sung so well that I will give you my daughter for your wife." The princess pleaded and prayed, but the king reminded her, "I told you I would give you to the first beggar that came along, and I will keep my word." Her tears were of no avail and she was married to the beggar-musician. Then the king said, "Now! Get ready to go; you cannot stay here; you must travel on with your husband."

Then the beggar departed and took the princess with him. Soon they came to a great forest. "Who owns this forest?" asked the princess. "It belongs to King Grisly-Beard," answered the beggar, "and if you had married him, it would have been yours." "Oh, what an unfortunate girl that I am," sighed the princess, "would that I had married King Grisly-Beard." Next they came to some fine meadows. "Whose are these beautiful, green meadows?" she asked. "They belong to King Grisly-Beard and if you had married him, they would all have been yours." "Oh, what an unfortunate girl that I am," she sighed, "would that I had married King Grisly-Beard."

They came to a great city. "Whose is this noble city?" asked the princess. "It belongs to King Grisly-Beard," answered the beggar, "and if you had married him, it would have been yours." "Oh, unfortunate girl that I am," she sighed, "why did I not marry King Grisly-Beard?" "That is no business of mine," said the beggar. "Why would you wish for another husband? Am I not good enough for you?"

At last they came to a small cottage. "What a terrible place," said the tired princess. "To whom does this dirty little house belong?" The beggar answered: "This is my house and this is where we are to live. Now make the fire, put on some water to boil and cook my supper, for I am very tired." But the princess knew nothing of making fires or cooking and the beggar was forced to help her. When they had eaten a very scanty meal, they went to bed. But the beggar woke her up very early in the morning to clean the house.

Thus they lived for two days and when they had eaten up all there was in the cottage, the beggar said: "Wife, we cannot go on like this, spending money and earning nothing. You must learn to weave baskets." So he went out and cut willows and brought them back home and she began to weave. But it made her fingers very sore. "I see that this won't work," said the beggar. "Try and spin. Perhaps you can do that better." So she sat down and tried to spin but the threads cut her tender fingers. "See now," said her husband, "you are good for nothing; you can do no work. What a bargain I got when I married you. However I'll try and set up a trade in pots and pans and you shall stand in the market place and sell them." "Alas!" cried the princess, "When I stand in the market and any of my father's servants pass by and see me, they will laugh at me."

But the beggar did not care and said that she had to work if she didn't want to die of hunger. At first the selling went well because many people, seeing such a beautiful woman, bought her pots and pans. The beggar and the princess lived on this money as long as it lasted. Then the beggar bought a fresh lot of pots and pans. The princess sat herself down in a corner of the market, waiting to sell. But a careless soldier soon came by and rode his horse against her stall and broke all her goods into a thousand pieces. She began to weep and knew not what to do. "Ah, what will become of me," she cried. "What will my husband say?" So she ran home and told him all. "You silly girl," he scolded. "Why did you sit in a corner of the market where everyone passes? Didn't you know that your pots and pans would be knocked over?" The beggar shook his finger at her. "Let's have no more of this crying. I have been to the King's palace and asked if they need a kitchen maid. They have promised to take you and though the work will be hard, you will have plenty to eat."

Thus the princess became a kitchen maid. She helped the cook do all of the dirtiest work and she was allowed to carry home some of the meat that was left over from the royal meals. On this, she and her beggar lived.

She had not been there very long before she heard that the king was passing by, going to be married. She went to one of the kitchen windows and looked out. Everything was ready. All the kings and queens from nearby countries were there. All the servants were dressed in the finest clothes. All the horses had silver saddles and all the streets in the city were decorated.

Then she thought, with an aching heart, of her own life and was bitterly sorry for her foolish pride which had brought her to this unfortunate state. When it was time for her to go home, the cook gave her a good deal of food which she put in her basket. Her beggar husband would have a good supper that night.

All of a sudden, as she was going out, in came the king, dressed in golden clothes. When he saw the beautiful girl at the door, he took her by the hand and said she would be his partner at the dance. But the princess trembled with fear for she saw that this king was King Grisly-Beard. Now he was making fun of her! He kept fast hold of her hand and brought her into the ballroom. In her struggle to get away, the cover of her basket came off and the food fell all around the floor. Everyone laughed and jeered at her and she was so ashamed that she wished herself a thousand feet deep in the earth.

The princess sprang for the door but on the steps King Grisly-Beard overtook her and brought her back. "Do not be afraid," he said. "Do you not recognise me as your beggar husband? Do you not recognise me as the soldier who over-turned your pots and pans in the market square? I did all of this to cure you of your pride and to punish you for the way you used to treat others. Now you have learned your lesson and it is time for us to celebrate our marriage feast."

Then the servants came and brought her the most beautiful clothes to wear. Her father and his whole court were there already. Everyone congratulated her. Joy was in every face but none more so than in the face of the princess. From that day on she never had a mean or nasty thing to say about anyone.

The wedding feast was grand and everyone was merry. I wish you and I had been there.

APPENDIX F

King Grisly Beard

Unfamiliar Story

Mother: You close the door now.

Karen (HPA): Okay.

M: This little red book here, this little book is the story the lady sent that she wants us to read together and it's a fairy tale. [C8D3 / C4D3]

K: Oh! So it won't be really happy then. [C5D3]

M: No! It's not something that happened, really happened. A fairy tale is make-believe. [C3D2 / C4D3 /C5D3]

K: Like . . . like Jack in the Beanstalk? [A2bB2]

M: Right. [C2D2]

K: We saw that movie in school and Mrs. _____ says it's just a fairy tale. [C4D3 / C5D4]

M: That's right. Well, this is a fairy tale too. It's by a very famous writer called -----. [C2D2 / C3D3 / C5D3]

K: Mum, I know another fairy tale like um . . . Runose, runose doesn't work that thing. [C4D3 / C5D3]

M: What? I don't know that one. [A1B5]

K: They kept on crying on her legs. [C4D3]

M: On whose legs? [A3B5]

K: Like . . . in the dream. [C5D3]

M: Oh! Was that out of a book . . . out of a fairy tale book? [C5D3]

K: No. My dream last night. [C3D2 / C4D3]

M: Oh! But you didn't dream it 'cause you saw a story about it or anything, did you? [A2bB4]

K: No. I didn't see a story about it. [C3D2 / C1D1]

M: Okay. Well, this is a fairy story called King Grisly Beard. Ever heard of King Grisly Beard? [C8D3 / A2bB2]

K: Nope. [C3D2]

M: Neither have I. I guess it'll be new for both of us. [C4D3 / C5D4]

K: Mum, is it coloured in the pictures? [A2bB2]

M: I don't think so. Let me see. No! Just black and white pictures. You let me know if you see anything you like in there. This was written a long time ago by the brothers Grimm. [C3D3 / C4D3 / C2D2 / C3D3 / C3D3 / C4D4]

K: Before you were born? [A2bB2]

M: (Laughs). Yes. Well before I was born. Even before Grandma was born. [C2D2 / C3D3 / C4D3]

K: That's long ago. [C4D3]

Text: A great king had a daughter who was very beautiful but so proud and haughty and conceited that none of the princes who came to ask for her hand in marriage were good enough for her, and she only made fun of them.

At one time the king, her father, held a feast and invited all her suitors; they sat in a row according to their rank . . . kings and princes, dukes and earls.

M: Earls and dukes are like kings. See? There they all are lined up. [C7aD3 / A2bB2 / C7bD3]

Text: Then the princess came and passed by them all, but she had something mean to say about every one. The first was too fat. "He's as round as a tub," said she. The next was too tall. "He's like a flag pole," she said. The next was too short. "What a dumpling," she cried. The fourth was not straight enough, so she said he was like a green stick laid to dry over a baker's oven. She had some joke to crack upon every one; but she laughed most of all at a good, young king who was there. "Look at him," she shouted, pointing her finger, "his beard is like an old mop. He shall be called Grisly-Beard." So that young king got the nickname of Grisly-Beard.

But her father was very angry when he saw how his daughter behaved and how she ill-treated all his guests.

M: That was pretty rude of her, wasn't it? [A2bB4]

K: Right. Why was she rude? [C2D2 / A3B5]

M: 'Cause she didn't like how they looked. We mustn't make fun of the way people look, must we? [C4D4 / A2bB4]

K: No. [C2D2]

Text: He vowed that, willing or not, she would have to marry the first beggar who came to the door.

Two days after there came by a musician who began to sing under the window and to beg for money. When the old king heard him he said, "Let him come in." So the servants brought in a dirty-looking fellow and when he had sung before the king and the princess, he begged for money. Then the king said, "You have sung so well that I will give you my daughter for your wife." The princess pleaded and prayed, but the king reminded her, "I told you I would give you to the first beggar that came along, and I will keep my word."

M: Pleading is like . . . it's like when you nag mum to do things. Like when you say "Can I? Can I? Can I?" when you really want something. The princess pleaded you see. "Have I got to, have I got to?" 'cause she didn't want to go with the beggar. [C7aD3 / C4D5 / C3D4 / C4D5]

K: Oh!

Text: Her tears were of no avail and she was married to the beggar-musician. Then the king said, "Now! Get ready to go; you cannot stay here; you must travel on with your husband."

Then the beggar departed and took the princess with him. Soon they came to a great forest. "Who owns this forest?" asked the princess. "It belongs to King Grisly-Beard," answered the beggar, "and if you had married him, it would have been yours." "Oh, what an unfortunate girl that I am," sighed the princess, "would that I had married King Grisly-Beard." Next they came to some fine meadows. "Whose are these beautiful, green meadows?" she asked. "They belong to King Grisly-Beard and if you had married him, they would all have been yours." "Oh, what an unfortunate girl that I am," she sighed, "would that I had married King Grisly-Beard."

They came to a great city. "Whose is this noble city?" asked the princess. "It belongs to King Grisly-Beard," answered the beggar, "and if you had married him, it would have been yours." "Oh, unfortunate girl that I am," she sighed, "why did I not marry King Grisly-Beard?" "That is no business of mine," said the beggar. "Why would you wish for another husband? Am I not good enough for you?"

M: And there they are walking along. [C7bD3]

K: She's sad. [C7aD3]

M: Sad. You're right. [C1D1 / C2D2]

K: Real sad. [C5D3]

M: Would you be sad? [A2bB2]

K: I guess so. [C4D3]

M: Why? [A3B5]

K: 'Cause I don't want to marry a beggar. [C4D3]

M: You won't darling. No beggars for you, I promise. [C2D3 / C4D3]

Text: At last they came to a small cottage. "What a terrible place," said the tired princess. "To whom does this dirty little house belong?" The beggar answered: "This is my house and this is where we are to live. Now make the fire, put on some water to boil and cook my supper, for I am very tired." But the princess knew nothing of making fires or cooking and the beggar was forced to help her. When they had eaten a very scanty meal, they went to bed. But the beggar woke her up very early in the morning to clean the house.

Thus they lived for two days and when they had eaten up all there was in the cottage, the beggar said: "Wife, we cannot go on like this, spending money and earning nothing. You must learn to weave baskets." So he went out and cut willows and brought them back home and she began to weave. But it made her fingers very sore. "I see that this won't work," said the beggar. "Try and spin. Perhaps you can do that better." So she sat down and tried to spin but the threads cut her tender fingers. "See now," said her husband, "you are good for nothing; you can do no work. What a bargain I got when I married you. However I'll try and set up a trade in pots and pans and you shall stand in the market place and sell them." "Alas!" cried the princess, "When I stand in the market and any of my father's servants pass by and see me, they will laugh at me."

K: What's servants? [A3B5]

M: People who work for you and you don't pay them much. [C4D3 / C5D3]

K: Like Barbara? [A2bB2]

M: A bit, yeah. Barbara cleans our house but we pay her a lot so she's not really a servant. [C2D2 / C4D3 / C5D4]

K: Oh.

M: Do you think the king's servants will make fun of her? [A2bB2]

K: No. [C3D2]

M: No? [A1BA]

K: Yeah, they will. Maybe. [C3D2 / C4D3]

M: It's possible. There she is, weaving a basket. [C4D3 / C7bD3]

K: What's weaving? [A3B5]

M: Twisting the sticks, well like sticks, in and out and over and back like this. See? That's weaving. [C4D3 / C5D3 / A2bB2 / C4D3]

Text: But the beggar did not care and said that she had to work if she didn't want to die of hunger. At first the selling went well because many people, seeing such a beautiful woman, bought her pots and pans. The beggar and the princess lived on this money as long as it lasted. Then the beggar bought a fresh lot of pots and pans. The princess sat herself down in a corner of the market, waiting to sell. But a careless soldier soon came by and rode his horse against her stall and broke all her goods into a thousand pieces. She began to weep and knew not what to do. "Ah, what will become of me," she cried. "What will my husband say?" So she ran home and told him all. "You silly girl," he scolded. "Why did you sit in a corner of the market where everyone passes? Didn't you know that your pots and pans would be knocked over?" The beggar shook his finger at her. "Let's have no more of this crying. I have been to the King's palace and asked if they need a kitchen maid. They have promised to take you and though the work will be hard, you will have plenty to eat."

M: At least he gives her enough to eat. He's not nice, is he? [C7bD3 / A2bB4]

K: No. He scolded her. I don't like scolding. [C2D2 / C7aD3 / C4D3]

M: Why not? [A3B5]

K: 'Cause it burns. [C4D3]

M: Burns? [C1D1]

K: Yeah, with the water. [C2D2 / C4D3]

M: Oh, Karen, that's "scald" not "scold". Scolding is when someone gets mad at you. You're right though, scalding does hurt. But he didn't do that. That'd be too mean. He just got made at her, mad a little bit like I do sometimes when you don't do what I want. [C4D3 / C5D3 / C2D3 / C3D3 / C5D3 / C5D4]

K: Oh, Not scald, just scold. [C1D1]

M: Yeah. Let's see what happens next. [C2D2 / C8D3]

Text: Thus the princess became a kitchen maid. She helped the cook do all of the dirtiest work and she was allowed to carry home some of the meat that was left over from the royal meals. On this, she and her beggar lived.

She had not been there very long before she heard that the king was passing by, going to be married. She went to one of the kitchen windows and looked out. Everything was ready. All the kings and queens from nearby countries were there. All the servants were dressed in the finest clothes. All the horses had silver saddles and all the streets in the city were decorated.

Then she thought, with an aching heart, of her own life and was bitterly sorry for her foolish pride which had brought her to this unfortunate state. When it was time for her to go home, the cook gave her a good deal of food which she put in her basket. Her beggar husband would have a good supper that night.

All of a sudden, as she was going out, in came the king, dressed in golden clothes. When he saw the beautiful girl at the door, he took her by the hand and said she would be his partner at the dance. But the princess trembled with fear for she saw that this king was King Grisly-Beard. Now he was making fun of her! He kept fast hold of her hand and brought her into the ballroom. In her struggle to get away, the cover of her basket came off and the food fell all around the floor. Everyone laughed and jeered at her and she was so ashamedthat she wished herself a thousand feet deep in the earth.

M: They're all looking at her, she is so embarrassed. Do you know what jeer is? [C7bD3 / C4D3 / A2bB2]

K: No. [C3D2]

M: Making fun of her. They 'laughed and jeered at her.' Now it's her turn to feel bad. [C4D3 / C8D3 / C5D3]

K: She was bad before. [C4D3]

M: Right. Remember when you've been mean to David and then he gets mean at you? Well, that's what's happened to her. [C2D2 / A2bB2 / C4D3]

Text: The princess sprang for the door but on the steps King Grisly-Beard overtook her and brought her back. "Do not be afraid," he said. "Do you not recognise me as your beggar husband? Do you not recognise me as the soldier who overturned your pots and pans in the market square? I did all of this to cure you of your pride and to punish you for the way you used to treat others. Now you have learned your lesson and it is time for us to celebrate our marriage feast."

M: What do you think of that? That was really him . . . King Grisly Beard all the time. Her husband, the beggar, was King Grisly Beard. He tricked her. [A3B5 / C4D3 / C4D3 / C5D3]

K: (Laughs).

M: He just pretended to be a beggar and he's the one who even knocked over her pots and pans. [C5D3 / C5D3]

Text: Then the servants came and brought her the most beautiful clothes to wear. Her father and his whole court were there already. Everyone congratulated her. Joy was in every face but none more so than in the face of the princess. From that day on she never had a mean or nasty thing to say about anyone.

The wedding feast was grand and everyone was merry. I wish you and I had been there.

K: That's King Grisly Beard? [C7bD3]

M: Yeah. That's him. Why do you think that's him? [C2D2 / C4D3 / A3B5]

K: 'Cause he has a beard. [C4D3]

M: Um-um. And what else makes him look like a king? [C2D2 / A3B5]

K: A crown and a royal cape. [C4D3]

M: And there's the feast on the table. Looks like a real party. [C7bD3 / C4D3]

K: Yeah. There's the prince . .. the King Grisly Beard. And that must be the Queen. [C2D2 / C7bD3 / C7bD3]

M: Must be. But it said . . . I think that there were other royal guests there so I think other kings and queens from neighbouring places came to the wedding. [C2D2 / C4D3 / C5D4]

K: Then it could be them. [C4D3]

M: Right. Did you like the story? [C2D2 / A2bB2]

K: Yeah. It was sad for a while but then it got happy. [C2D2 / C4D3 / C5D3]

M: Right. [C2D2]

Make Way For the Highway Familiar Story

Mother: Okay! You want to read this instead of the Velveteen Rabbit?

John (LPA): Yeah.

M: You're sure now?

J: Yeah.

M: Okay. Make way for the highway. We've read this a 1000 times, I'm sure. Haven't we? Are you ready to listen now?

J: Yes.

Text: A new highway was being built. People and machines worked day after day and week after week.

Rocks and trees had to be pushed aside. Hills had to be cut through. The new highway would go the shortest, quickest way.

First came the bulldozer. Mike ran the bulldozer.

M: Look at the bulldozer.

Text: "Anything that can be pushed," said Mike proudly, "we will push."

He steered the bulldozer toward a big rock and began to push the rock slowly aside.

J: And it landed on the foxes.

M: On the foxes, yeah!

Text: Under the rock lived a mother fox and her four babies. When the rock began to move, they got scared.

The mother fox and her babies dashed off toward the woods.

Next Mike turned his bulldozer toward a clump of bushes. [child echoes several of the words]

A cottontail rabbit who had his home in those bushes shook with fear when he saw the great machine coming.

Away dashed the rabbit as fast as he could.

J: "As fast as he could," yeah!

Text: Mike steered the bulldozer toward a tall elm tree. The tree had been there for a hundred years. But now it had to go. [child echoes]

Away flew a pair of robins whose nest was in the tree.

"Sorry," called Mike, "but the highway must go through!" [child echoes]

M: Don't do that, John. I can't read when you do that.

J: What?

M: Say the words with me. Listen now.

Text: Behind Mike's bulldozer came a back hoe to scoop up the dirt.

Then came a crane. Tony ran the crane. "Anything that can be lifted," said Tony, "we will lift."

M: See? No matter what happens, the highway has to go through.

J: Yeah! That's right, mister.

Text: Tony pulled a lever. Down swung the two big steel jaws. Slowly the crane lifted rocks and dirt into the air. Tony swung the crane over and carefully set the rocks and dirt in the dump truck.

J: Crash! All the dirt falls out.

M: We've read this book so much, it's all ripped here.

Text: Pedro drove the dump truck. He was a good driver. "Anything that can be dumped," said Pedro, "we will dump."

He backed the load of dirt and rocks up to the edge of a steep bank. Then he tilted the back of the truck.

Crash! Bang! went the rocks as they filled up the hollow.

M: That's like Uncle Michael's truck, isn't it?

J: His is green.

M: Right! And this one is red.

Text: After the rocks and dirt were cleared away other machines came in.

There was a grader. It smoothed out the road.

There was a roller. It pressed down the earth.

There were trucks that poured crushed stone on the roadway.

There were spreaders that spread on the concrete top.

Mike and Tony kept far ahead of the other machines. "They do the easy work," said Mike to Tony. "We break ground. We're the earth movers."

All at once Mike stopped his bulldozer. Right in the path of the highway stood a little old house. Tall trees grew around it. Yellow roses climbed over the front door.

"I guess we'll have to take that house down," said Mike. Mike's bulldozer could knock a house down in half an hour.

M: Isn't that something, eh?

J: Yeah! It just pushes it over. Not our house,though.

Text: Just then a little old lady stepped out of the house. She shook her apron at some chickens near the door. "Shoo!" she said.

Then she saw the big machines. She shook her apron at them. "Shoo!" she said, as though they were chickens, too.

J: How come she says "shoo" to the chickens?

M: She doesn't want them in the way of the bulldozer.

Text: Mike climbed down from his bulldozer.

"I'm sorry, ma'am," he said politely, "but we have to take this house down."

"No, you don't," said the little old lady.

"The new highway goes right through here," said Mike.

"No, it doesn't," said the little old lady.

M: Silly, eh?

J: It goes around her house.

M: Right. But that happens later, eh?

J; Yeah.

Text: "You'll be paid for your land," said Mike.

"Money isn't everything," said the little old lady.

Mike scratched his head. "I'll have to talk to the Big Boss," he said. He climbed into his bulldozer and drove away.

Next day the Big Boss came to the little old house. "I'm sorry, ma'am," he said. "This house must come down."

"Young man," said the little old lady, "I've lived in this house for seventy years. I watched these trees grow. I planted that rose bush. I'm not leaving."

"But the highway must go through," said the Big Boss. "People want the shortest, quickest way these days."

"What's their hurry?" asked the little old lady.

The Big Boss shook his head. He didn't know.

The little old lady looked at her rose bush. Then she turned to Mike. "Does your mother grow roses?" she asked.

"Red roses grow all over her cottage," Mike replied. "You can smell them as you come down the road." [child echoes]

"Does your mother grow roses?" she asked Tony.

"You never saw prettier ones!" said Tony proudly.

"The sweetest roses in the world are in Puerto Rico," said Pedro. "They grow in my mother's garden."

"You see," said the little old lady to the Big Boss, "those machines can tear things down, but they can't grow roses like mine." [child echoes]

"I'll have to talk to the Bigger Boss," said the Big Boss, and he drove off.

M: John, don't talk behind me, okay?

J: Okay.

Text: Mike and Tony and Pedro looked at the little old house.

"You know," said Mike slowly, "the road could run a little to the right."

"People driving by would like to see the roses," said Pedro.

Tony nodded. "There'll be a moon tonight," he said. "We could work late."

And they did. They worked all night in their big machines.

J: That's pushing and that's pushing and that one's pushing.

M: And where's the little old house with the roses?

J: There!

M: Oh, there it is. Yeah.

J: And the next day.---

M: How do you know it's the next day?

J: Because 'next day the Big Boss comes.'

M: That's right.

Text: The new road ran well to the right of the little old house.

"What's all the fuss about?" shouted the Bigger Boss. He turned his car around and drove away.

Mike and Pedro and Tony grinned and winked at one another.

Next morning, back came the Big Boss with the Bigger Boss.

"Here's the house," said the Big Boss. "It's right in the path of the new highway—"

Then he stopped. [child echoes]

There ahead lay the new highway. The land had been cleared. The roadbed had been dug. The dirt had been smoothed.

J: I can read that part.

M: Okay! You do it for me.

J: __________

M: You've forgotten?

J: Yeah.

M: Well, tell me what happens.

J: I forget.

M: Okay.

Text: Now when you drive along the new highway you can see a little old house where the road swings to the right. Tall trees grow around it.

M: Look at the big trees, eh? Boy! They're bigger than Auntie Jessie's.

Text: A little old lady sits in front. Over the doorway grow beautiful yellow roses.

"Oh, look at the roses!" people cry as they drive by. They slow up a little to look.

"Hum," says the little old lady to her cat, "they're not in such a hurry, after all."

M: So what did you get from that? The story?

J: The old lady saved her house.

M: Right. Okay. That's it for now.

The Paper Bag Princess Familiar Story

Father: What kind of animal is that, Eileen? On the front of the cover?

Eileen (HPA): A dragon.

F: And what is that? Is that a creature, a monster on the picture beside the dragon?

E: A m___, a what?

F: A monster like Joey was at Halloween. What is that thing there? What _is_ that?

E: A princess.

F: A princess? And what--what do they call her in the book?

E: The paper bag princess.

F: Right. You know this book real well, don't you?

E: Yeah. Most of it.

F: Here we go. Are we ready?

E: Yeah. Ready, ready.

Text: Elizabeth was a beautiful princess. She lived in a castle and had expensive princess clothes. She was going to marry a prince named Ronald.

F: Your mommy married a prince called Ronald, didn't she?

E: _You're_ not a prince.

F: Oh! I'm a prince, aren't I? I'm not a prince named Ronald?

E: No! Your name's Ron but _you're_ not a prince!

F: You go ask mommy if she married a prince. Right now. Go ask her if she married a prince. Say "Did you marry a prince?"

E: (laughs and laughs)

Text: Unfortunately, a dragon smashed her castle, burned all her clothes with his fiery breath, and carried off Prince Ronald.

F: She's not wearing any clothes. Like you after your bath. What happened to them, Eileen?

E: The dragon burned them.

F: Such a nice dragon, eh?

E: No! He's mean, dad. Real mean.

F: Right! And where's the dragon taking Ronald?

E: To the big castle.

F: To the castle.

Text: Elizabeth decided to chase the dragon and get Ronald back.

She looked everywhere for something to wear but the only thing she could find that was not burnt was a paper bag. So she put on the paper bag and followed the dragon.

He was easy to follow because he left a trail of burnt forests and horses' bones.

Finally, Elizabeth came to a cave with a large door that had a huge knocker on it.

She took hold of the knocker and banged on the door.

The dragon stuck his nose out of the door and said, "Well, a princess! I love to eat princesses, but I have already eaten a whole castle today. I am a very busy dragon. . . . (pauses)

E: "Come back tomorrow" and she nearly "got her nose caught" when "he slammed the door."

Text: [Come back tomorrow." He slammed the door so fast that Elizabeth almost got her nose caught.] (text not read)

F: Right! Here's mom. Ask her what I said.

E: Mommy, did you marry a prince called Ronald?

Mother: I married a king called Ronald.

F: See, I told you! (all three laugh and laugh) So Elizabeth had the door slammed on her. And . . .

E: She "almost got her nose caught."

R: Right.

Text: Elizabeth grabbed the knocker and banged on the door again.

The dragon stuck his nose out of the door and said, "Go away. I love to eat princesses, but I have already eaten a whole castle today. I am a very busy dragon. Come back tomorrow."

E: I know. I know. I'll do it. "Wait! Are you the smartest and fiercetest dragon in the world" she said. "Yeah" said the dragon. He said.

Text: ["Wait," shouted Elizabeth. "Is it true that you are the smartest and fiercest dragon in the whole world?"

"Yes," said the dragon.] (text not read)

F: Way to go. Right. Fiercetest. That's a new word.

E: What word?

F: Fiercetest. You mean "fiercest," don't you?

E: I guess. Where's it? There?

F: No! That's "smartest." See? This one is "fiercest."

E: Oh!

F: Elizabeth is a pretty smart girl, 'cause she tired the dragon all out, didn't she?

E: Yeah! There's the castle!

F: Um-um. Elizabeth must be very smart.

E: Like me. Smart like a whip, right?

F: Right.

E: And there's the king. Not you, Dad. (laughs)

Text: "Is it true," said Elizabeth, "that you can burn up ten forests with your fiery breath?"

"Oh, yes," said the dragon, and he took a huge, deep breath and breathed out so much fire that he burnt up fifty forests.

E: "Fantastic." "Magnificent."

Text: "Fantastic," said Elizabeth, and the dragon took another huge breath and breathed out so much fire that he burnt up one hundred forests.

"Magnificent," said Elizabeth, and the dragon took another huge breath, but this time nothing came out.

The dragon didn't even have enough fire left . . . (pauses)

E: "To cook a meat ball."

Text: [to cook a meat ball.] (text not read)

Text: Elizabeth said, "Dragon, is it true that you can fly around the world in just ten seconds?"

"Why, yes," said the dragon and jumped up and flew all the way around the world in just ten seconds.

He was very tired when he got back, but . . . (pauses)

E: She shouted "Do it again." "Fan-tas-tic."

Text: [Elizabeth shouted, "Fantastic, do it again!"] (text not read)

F: Ten seconds! That's fast. Know what's a second?

E: On your watch?

F: Yeah. Look. See when that hand moves, it's a second, see?

E: Oh!

Text: So the dragon jumped up and flew around the whole world in just twenty seconds.

When he got back he was too tired to talk and he lay down and went . . . (pauses)

E: "Straight to sleep."

Text: [straight to sleep.] (text not read)

F: Snore, snore.

Text: Elizabeth whispered very softly, "Hey, dragon." The dragon didn't move at all.

She lifted up the dragon's ear and put her head right inside. She shouted as loud as she could, "Hey, dragon!"

E: And he didn't move.

F: Right.

Text: The dragon was so tired he didn't even move.

Elizabeth walked right over the dragon and opened the door to the cave.

There was Prince Ronald.

He looked at her and said, . . . (pauses)

E: You're a mess. You stink and you can only come back when you're pretty.

F: Something like that. Yeah!

Text: ["Elizabeth, you are a mess!] (text not read)

Text: You smell like ashes, your hair is all tangled and you are wearing a dirty old paper bag. Come back when you are dressed like a real princess."

"Ronald," said Elizabeth, "your clothes are really pretty and your hair is very neat. You look like a real prince, but . . . (pauses) (miscue on "prince")

E: You are a bum.

Text: [you are a bum."] (text not read)

E: You . . . a princess?

F: A real prince. That's right. You caught me, you caught me. I made a mistake and you caught me. But "you are a bum." Am I a bum?

E: Yeah! (laughs)

F: What? Am I?

E: Yeah . . . no!

Text: They didn't get married after all.

F: Why didn't they get married, Eileen?

E: 'Cause he's . . . he . . . the prince was a bum.

F: What was his name?

E: Ronald. Like you, dad. But you're not a prince! (laughs)

F: And what animal bugged Elizabeth and Ronald?

E: Bugged?

F: Yeah! "Bugged" like Joey does to you. Bothered.

E: A dragon. He's a mean one 'cause he bo-- bugged them.

F: Was she a real princess?

E: No.

F: Why not?

E: 'Cause she was all a mess.

F: But are you still Eileen when you're a mess with muddy clothes on and junk all over your face?

E: I never!

F: Did too! Remember when we were camping? You were a mess then. Were you still the same kid as now . .. you're clean?

E: Yeah!

F: Well, was Elizabeth a real princess?

E: Yeah . . . no. Maybe.

F: Okay (laughs). Maybe.

The Three Spinners Unfamiliar Story

Father: Oh a nice orange book. You're lucky. This is a fairy tale.

Shawn (LPA): What's a fairy tale?

F: I don't know. Oh! A fairy tale? Like it didn't happen ever you know. Pull your chair up close so you can see. Okay? Ready? It doesn't have many pictures so you'll have to be patient.

S: Show.

F: We'll see them when we get to them. Listen now. It might be a good story. Oh! It starts the way you like them to start.

Text: Once upon a time there was a lazy girl who didn't want to spin, and nothing her mother could say did a bit of good. In the end, the mother became so angry, so impatient with her, that the daughter began to cry.

At that very moment the noise of a vehicle could be heard, rumbling along the road. The queen happened to be riding past. When she heard the girl's cries, she stopped her carriage, went into the house, and asked the mother why her daughter was weeping so loudly that her sobs could be heard out on the road. The woman was too ashamed to say that her daughter was lazy, so she said: "I can't make her stop spinning; all she wants to do is spin and spin, but I am poor and I can't afford all that flax.

F: That's stuff you spin. Sit quietly now.

Text: The queen replied: "There's nothing I like more than the sound of spinning, and I'm never happier than when I hear the wheels whir. Let me take your daughter home with me to my palace. I've got plenty of flax, and I'll let her spin to her heart's content." The mother was delighted. So the girl ran to get her jacket and clogs and the queen took her away with her.

When they got to the castle, the queen took her upstairs and showed her four rooms. The first was filled with the most beautiful furniture and the finest clothing the lazy girl had ever seen. "Each day when you have finished spinning," said the queen, "come to this room, choose any dress which takes your fancy, lie on that bed which is as soft as freshly made butter, and dream sweet dreams. But remember, if you don't spin enough flax into yarn each day, you will have to remain in one of the other rooms with only the cold floor or a hard chair to rest upon." The queen then showed her the other three rooms, each filled full of the finest flax, full from floor to ceiling. "Just spin this flax," said the queen, "and when all is turned into yard, you will have my eldest son, the prince, for a husband."

The girl was frightened to death, for she couldn't have spun all that flax into yarn if she had lived to be three hundred years old. When she was left alone, she began to cry, and she cried for three days without lifting a finger. Each night she curled up on the floor or a chair and tried to sleep. Each day when the queen came in, she became more and more surprised to see that none of the flax had been spun. The girl gave excuses which the queen accepted, until finally, her patience wearing thin, she said: "If you don't start spinning by tomorrow, you will be punished."

When the girl was alone again, she didn't know what to do. In her distress she stood at the window, looking out, and she saw three women coming down the road. The first had a broad, flat foot;

F: Oh, that's her there.

Text: the second had a lower lip so big that it hung down over her chin;

F: That's funny, eh?

Text: and the third had a big, broad thumb.

F: Bigger than mine, I'm sure.

S: Than mine?

F: Oh sure. Look! Mine is bigger than yours, see?

Text: They stopped outside the window, looked up, and asked her what the matter was. She told them about the trouble she was in, and they offered to help her. "We'll spin all your flax for you and quickly too," they said, "if only you'll invite us to your wedding and not be ashamed of us; introduce us as your cousins and let us sit at your table." "With all my heart," the girl replied. "Come in. You can start work right away."

F: That's the one with the lip there. No! Don't do that with your face.

Text: So she let the three peculiar women in and made a space for them in the first room of flax. They started spinning. The first woman drew the thread and moved the treadle with her foot; the second wet the thread between her lips; the third twisted it and struck the table with her thumb. Each time she hit the table, a piece of spun yarn fell to the floor.

The girl hid the three spinners from the queen and showed her such a pile of yarn every morning she came in that she couldn't praise her enough. At night the three odd women and the girl hurried to the first room, climbed up on the four poster and dreamed sweet dreams.

S: What?

F: A "four poster" is a bed.

S: A bed.

Text: Because the queen was so pleased with the girl, she had her servants bring the best food in the land for her supper each night, although she was surprised at how much the girl could eat and still stay so slim. Meats, vegetables and fruit of all kinds arrived on silver platters. The three women grew fat on all the goodies they ate, but especially so on the gooseberries which were their favorites.

S: What's "gooseberries"?

F: Fruit that you eat.

S: Oh fruit.

Text: When the first room was empty of flax and spun into yarn, the three women started on the second, and then on the third, until it too was soon empty.

Then the women took their leave and said to the girl:

S: Ah! There's the thumb. Bigger than yours, Dad?

F: Big anyway.

Text: "We've spun all your flax for you, and quickly too. You have been kind to us. But don't forget your promise to invite us to your wedding.

S: It's big, eh Dad?

F: Yeah, it is.

Text: It will bring you more good fortune." And off they went.

When the queen saw the empty rooms and the enormous piles of yarn, she arranged for the wedding. She ordered the royal tailors to make a silver gown for the bride and a golden doublet for the groom. The royal carpenters readied their tools to make a beautiful throne for the new princess. The sounds of hammers and mallets could be heard throughout the land.

The prince was delighted to be getting such a hard-working wife. "I've three cousins," said the girl. "They've been very good to me and it wouldn't be right to forget them now in my happiness. Would you let me invite them to the wedding and ask them to sit at my table?" The queen and bridegroom were delighted to agree. "If it makes you happy, then ask them to come," they said.

The bride and groom drove to the wedding feast in a glass coach pulled by six white horses. Just as the wedding supper was about to begin, the three old women appeared. (miscue on "odd")

S: "Odd" or "old"?

F: Odd. The "odd women" because one had a big foot, one had a bit lip and one had a thumb. That's odd, isn't it? To have what they have? That's why they say odd.

Text: The girl said: "Welcome, dear cousins."

"Good heavens," said the prince. "How did you ever come by such peculiar looking cousins?"

He went over to the one with the broad, flat foot, and asked: "How did you get such a broad foot?" "By treading," she replied. "By treading." The prince went to the second woman who was by then slurping berries from a spoon and asked: "How did you get that hanging lip?" "By licking," she replied. "By licking." And he asked the third: "How did you get that big, broad thumb?" "By twisting thread," she answered. "By twisting thread."

The prince was horrified. "In that case," he said, "my beautiful bride shall never touch a spinning wheel again."

So from that moment on, there was never any question of the lazy girl ever having to spin flax again.

F: Why? Why did she never have to spin flax again?

S: 'Cause it's all gone.

F: No. Because the prince didn't want her looking like those, did he? He thought if she spun a lot of flax, she'd end up with a big thumb, a big lip, and a big foot. He was afraid and he didn't want